Early Stone Temples of Orissa

Vidya Dehejia



For seven hundred years, between AD 600 to 1300, the forbears of today's Orissans created innumerable temples of sustained quality and in a remarkably homogenous style. Indeed, the area of ancient Orissa provides one of the finest expressions of Indian temple architecture. This book concentrates upon the genesis and early development of the Orissan temple, and of the architectural style prevalent between AD 600 and 1000.

A penetrating and profusely illustrated work, it begins with a survey of the geographical divisions of ancient Orissa, of the history of the early period, and the religious climate. It then concentrates on an analysis of the architectural features and traces in detail the original development of the Orissan temple from its inception as a squat shrine tower with a haphazardly decorated hall in front, to a sophisticated and planned architectural duo. The newly discovered *Silpa Prakash* text on architecture is used to reinforce the argument.

The author has also made a valuable study of the numerous copper plate inscriptions of the rulers of Orissa, and with the help of a series of palaeographical charts, she has traced in detail the development of the Orissan script up to AD 1000. This is being done here for the first time.

The last chapter combines the sequences provided by architecture and sculpture with the information that has been collected from the study of inscriptions, history, and religion to yield the final conclusions on the development of the early Orissan temple.

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The Singanath temple on an island in the Mahanadi river.

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for Pratap
guide, philosopher and friend

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Preface

Orissa conjures up visions of sandy, windswept beaches with tall palms and swaying casurina trees, while dotting this coastal scene are magnificent monuments—the famous Sun Temple at Konarak, the Jagannath at Puri, and the Lingaraj at Bhubanesvar. The artistic beauty of these monuments captures one's imagination, making one stop to ponder over the special style of these temples and the distant origins of their perfection. Where and when did this distinctive Orissan style of temple originate? Who was responsible for the initiation and construction of these temples, and was the Konarak-Puri-Bhubanesvar coastal area always the hub of such artistic activity?

These and other such questions prompted the research which I undertook under the sponsorship of the Homi Bhabha Fellowship Council, and which finally took form in the present work. The Fellowship enabled me to travel extensively through the various districts of Orissa as also the adjoining areas of north Andhra and Madhya Pradesh in search of ancient artistic remains. I found that in almost every district of Orissa, along the courses of the many rivers, there are remains of early temples. The foundations of the Orissan temple style were apparently laid around AD 600, and in this book I concentrate upon the birth of the Orissan temple, tracing its development up to the period of its early maturity around AD 950.

The introduction contains a survey of the geographical divisions of ancient Orissa, of the history of the early period, and of the religious climate of the time as a background against which to view the evolution of temple architecture. This introductory chapter also contains a brief discussion of ancient Orissan architectural texts, and in particular, of the recently discovered *Silpa Prakasa*. This is followed by an analysis of architectural features which traces in detail the development of the Orissan temple from its inception as a squat shrine tower with a haphazardly decorated hall in front, to a sophisticated and planned architectural duo. Chapter Four examines various sculptural themes that appear repeatedly in the temples.

On an analysis of the architectural and sculptural material available, I have propounded three phases in the development of the early Orissan temple—the Formative Phase, the Phase of Transition, and the Culmination Phase. Chapters Five, Six and Seven are devoted to a consideration of the temples that come under each one of these phases, after a preliminary discussion in each chapter detailing the typical features of the temple of that phase. Chapter

Eight considers the numerous copper-plate inscriptions of the rulers of Orissa, and with the help of a series of palaeographical charts that we have drawn up, it details the development of the Orissan script up to AD 1000—an exercise that has not been undertaken before. With such an evolution of script as a basis, we have considered the few undated, often fragmentary, inscriptions that are to be found on the temples themselves or on loose sculptures, and assigned tentative dates to such records.

The last chapter combines the sequences provided by architecture and sculpture with the information we have been able to collect from the study of inscriptions, history, and religion to yield our final conclusions on the development of the early Orissan temple. Also included is an enquiry into the probable origins of the Orissan temple, a subject that has generally been bypassed.

I must record my thanks to the Homi Bhabha Fellowship Council which has made it possible for me to carry out this research as a Bhabha Fellow between 1973 and 1975. Dr Pratapaditya Pal of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art rendered substantial help in the preparation of this book, and his advice and guidance at various stages has been instrumental in bringing it to its final stage. I am deeply indebted to him. Mention must also be made of my grateful appreciation of Dr S. Sivaramamurti for his readiness to spend valuable time in discussions with me. Nor can I forget the cooperation I received in Bhubanesvar from Mr P. L. Ray of the Orissa State Department of Archaeology, and from Mr Mahapatra of the Orissa State Museum. My special thanks go to the Photo Section of the Archaeological Survey of India office in New Delhi which has provided some of the photographs and allowed me to reproduce them here; also to Mr A. K. Ghosh who helped with the line drawings. My thanks are due also to Ms Margaret Javeri and Ms Sophy Joseph for their cooperation in typing the manuscript. Finally, I owe much to my parents and my husband for their understanding and valuable suggestions.

VIDYA DEHEJIA

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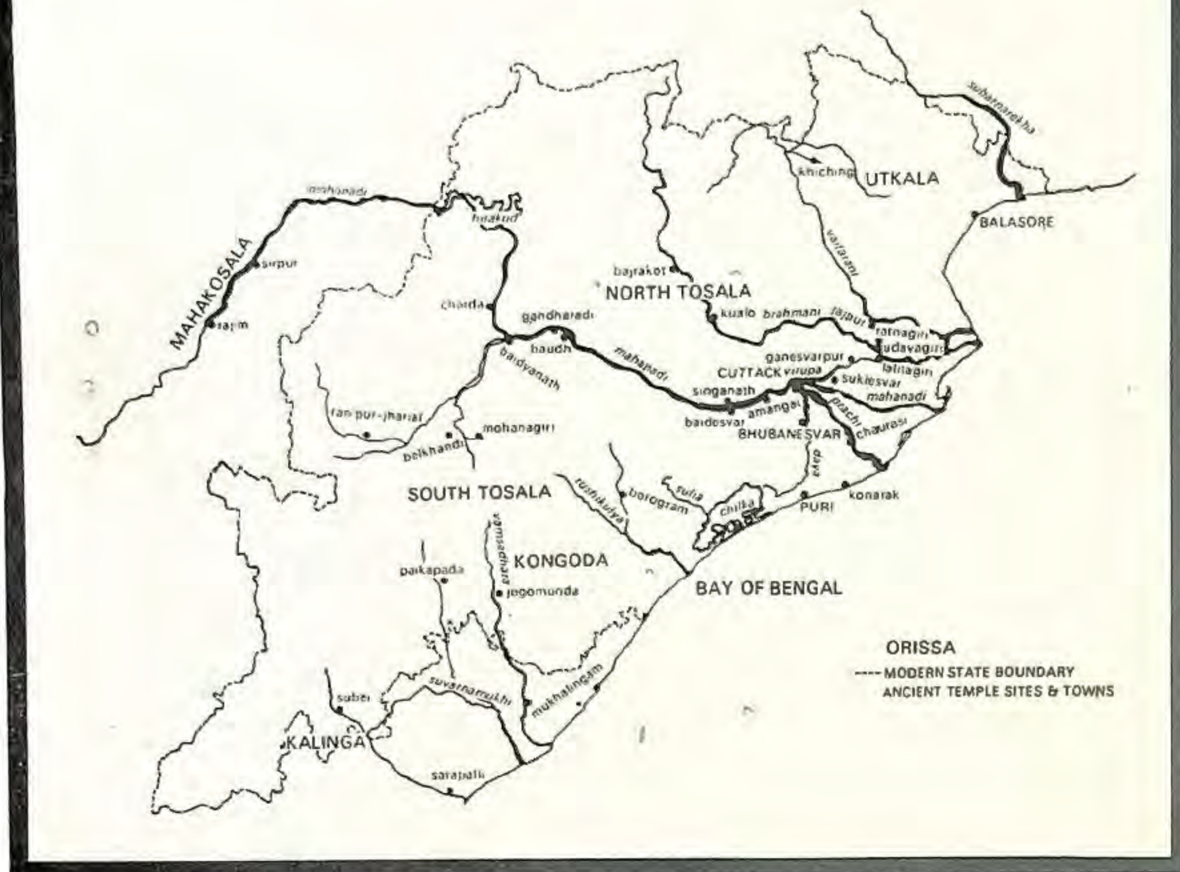
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Introduction

Washed by the waters of the Bay of Bengal on one side, and isolated from the rest of our country by various mountain ranges, is the state of Orissa on the east coast of India. A beautiful, fertile land with green paddy fields, swaying casurina trees and tall palms, Orissa is today one of the least developed states in India. Away from the main towns, one sees, architecturally speaking, nothing more pretentious than a mud hut with a thatched roof, and in terms of sculpture only a clay *mata ghora*, a horse for the mother goddess. Yet for some seven hundred years, between AD 600 and 1300, in this same region, the forbears of today's Orissans created innumerable temples of sustained quality and in a remarkably homogeneous style. Indeed the area of ancient Orissa provides one of the finest expressions of Indian temple architecture. While sharing features in common with other northern temple styles such as the group at Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh and those in Rajasthan, Orissa developed a characteristic local style that is distinguished for its imaginative conception and bold execution. In this book we shall concentrate upon the genesis and early development of the Orissan temple and of the architectural style prevalent between AD 600 and 1000.

Along the three hundred miles of the Orissa coast line is a broad alluvial belt in which lie most of the important towns of ancient as of present times. Here too are all the better-known temples of Orissa—the famous Black Pagoda of Konarak, the renowned Jagannath temple of Puri and the many shrines of the temple town of Bhubanesvar. There are several large rivers in Orissa and these were important means of communication from the coast to the interior. Along their courses are to be found the remaining notable towns of ancient times, as also the ruins of several lesser-known but equally significant Hindu temples and Buddhist monasteries.

The largest and most important of the rivers is the Mahanadi which rises in the mountains of Madhya Pradesh and flows with its numerous tributaries all the way through Orissa into the Bay of Bengal. North of the Mahanadi are two other major rivers, the Brahmani and the Vaitarani, while to the south is the large salt-water Chilka lake which once formed part of the Bay of Bengal. Below Chilka is the Rishikulya river, and still further south, rising in the mountains of Orissa but flowing out into the sea through the state of Andhra Pradesh, is the river Vamsadhara. The coastal strip in this area is today included in Andhra Pradesh, but in ancient times it was undoubtedly



Map of Orissa indicating ancient geographical regions and temple sites.

part of the country of Orissa.

The state and district boundaries of modern Orissa do not always correspond to the ancient political divisions of which we have knowledge from inscriptions and documents. The southernmost portion upto the river Vamsadhara and a little beyond was called Kalinga, with its capital Kalinganagara which has been identified with modern Mukhalingam. The central portion which includes most of present-day Orissa was known as Tosala. The main towns of this area were Bhubanesvar, Puri on the sea, Cuttack on the Mahanadi river, and Jajpur on the river Vaitarani. Tosala was divided into two sections—north Tosala was the area north of the Mahanadi upto the Vaitarani, while south Tosala extended from the Mahanadi down to the river Vamsadhara. South Tosala had a further subdivision known as Kongoda, which seems to have comprised the portion from the Chilka lake down to mount Mahendra. The area north of the Vaitarani, extending into the southern districts of Bengal was known as Utkala, and the port of Balasore must have been one of its main towns. To the west, beyond the sweep of the Mahanadi river was the area known as Kosala, and south of Kalinga was Andhra. There is reference also to an area called Odra, from which the modern term Orissa is derived. Exactly what this area comprised is not quite certain, but it appears to have been another name for parts of Tosala, and may have included also the southern portion of Utakala.

The main concentration of early shrines is in the area of Tosala, and a large number of temples are located along the banks of the Mahanadi and its tributaries, as also along the Brahmani river. Apart from this major group, we find a few early temples along the Vamsadhara river and on a tributary of the Suvarnamukhi river. Perhaps these temples are located in Kalinga —a region to which are clearly assigned the temples at Mukhalingam and the shrine at Sarapalli. The single ancient temple site of Khiching lies in Utkala to the north.

In the period between 600 and 1000, ancient Orissa never found itself under the rule of any one single dynasty. Nor did the various regions of ancient Orissa form neat boundaries for successive dynasties. A line of rulers did not necessarily come into power, reign and disappear. A family might lie dormant for a century as petty chieftains, and then take advantage of a temporary decline in power to declare themselves rulers again. The Bhanja kings, whom we find ruling in five different periods over three distinct areas, are a prime example.

The history of Orissa during the period of the early development of its temples is a confused history of several sets of ruling families, some even issuing grants as feudatories while acknowledging the authority of a superior ruler. The areas over which these various groups ruled is often quite uncertain, and it is impossible to put down exact boundaries for any of the kingdoms, or to pinpoint their capital cities. We shall therefore confine ourselves to a brief historical survey[1] against which to view the development of the early temples.

In the centuries BC the whole of Orissa was known as Kalinga, and the area first enters the national historical scene when, as a result of his famous



The Muktesvar temple at Bhubanesvar—an exquisite example of the refinement of later Orissan temples.



Copper-plate grant of Queen Dandi Mahadev bearing the Orissan script of the 10th century.

Kalinga campaign, the emperor Asoka Maurya, added the region to his empire. The first known Orissan dynasty is the Chedi family with its famous emperor Kharavela who ruled around the beginning of the Christian era. From the end of Kharavela's reign upto the time the Sailodbhava dynasty came into power—a period of about 600 years—nothing is known with any certainty regarding the rulers of Orissa. The *Madala Panji*, the temple records of the Jagannath temple at Puri, describe the history of Orissa from very early times, but the chronicle was written only in the sixteenth century and its account of the early period cannot be regarded as authentic. Coins of the imperial Kushan rulers found in small hoards from varying parts of Orissa suggest that Kushan control perhaps extended over Orissa in some indirect form.

The advent of the Guptas on the national scene does not help much in illuminating the Orissan historical picture. The complete absence of the mention of any Orissan ruler from the long list of defeated kings in the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta is curious. There are at least five copper-plate charters from different parts of Orissa that are dated in the Gupta era, the dates varying from Gupta year 250 to 300. The records are from Utkala, Tosala and Kongoda, but none of these areas is mentioned in the Allahabad *prasasti*. It seems highly likely that Orissa was under indirect Gupta supremacy with local rulers acting as governors. It was sometime during this phase that the basic style of Orissan temple architecture took shape.

The Sailodbhavas emerge as a ruling family in the early years of the sixth century and their first inscription is dated in the Gupta Year 300, or AD

619. At that date Madhavaraja of the Sailodbhava family acknowledged the suzerainty of Maharajadhiraja Sasanka of Bengal. Subsequent copper plates of the ruler Madhavaraja indicate that he was an independent ruler and it appears that he declared his independence after Sasanka's death.

Copperplate grants of the Sailodbhava rulers indicate that the dynasty ruled over south Tosala. The earliest Sailodbhava inscription is issued from Kongoda on the banks of the Salima river (Sulia or Rishikulya) and it would appear that the dynasty, starting as a ruling family in Kongoda, soon extended its sway over all of south Tosala. Since the grants are invariably issued from the Kongoda *mandala*, we may assume that their capital was located in that region. Sailodbhava grants do not help us to trace the origin of the dynasty, nor do they enable us to set down a firm chronological table for the rulers.

Our researches suggest that the Sailodbhava dynasty ruled for roughly 150 years, from 610-750. Madhavaraja was followed by his son Madhyamaraja, after whom there was a succession fight between his two sons Madhava and Dharmaraja.[2] It seems likely that the successful claimant, Dharmaraja, ruled right upto 736 when the Bhauma-Kara dynasty captured the Kongoda country from the Sailodbhavas. The dynasty seems to have come to an end around 750.[3]

The Bhauma-Kara kings seem to have belonged to two separate groups. The early Karas describe themselves as belonging to the Utkala family, but there are no real signs of their activity in Utkala and it would appear from a study of their inscriptions, that they ruled primarily in north and south

DYNASTIC TABLE

	Sailodbhavas	*Bhauma-Karas*	*Somavamsis*
600	Madhavaraja		
650	Madhyamaraja		
700	Dharmaraja		Tivara
730	Defeat by Bhauma-Karas	736 Kshemenkara	Balarjuna Mahasivagupta
750	End of dynasty 750	Sivakara	
800		Subhakaradeva Sivakaradeva	End of Kosala lineage
850		End of early Keras	
900			Start of Orissan lineage
950			Yayati Mahasivagupta
1000			Bhimaratha Indraratha —1022 End of lineage with Rajendra Chola's invasion

Tosala, having taken over the Kongoda area from the Sailodbhavas. Most Bhauma-Kara grants are issued from their capital town of Guhadevapataka which has been identified with Jajpur.

Subhakaradeva, the third ruler of the early Karas, describes himself as *paramasaugata* or the 'devout worshipper of the Buddha'. There is little doubt that this ruler is to be identified with the king named Subhakara who sent an autographed manuscript of his philosophical treatise *Ganda Vyuha* to the Chinese emperor Te-Tsong, which was received by the latter in 795.[4] Subhakara's copper plate grant is dated in the year 54 of the Bhauma era, and if this corresponds with 795, we may assume that the Bhauma era and Bhauma rule commenced around 740,[5] soon after the Sailodbhava dynasty collapsed. We have three more kings after Subhakara, and the six rulers of the early Kara dynasty appear to have been in power from 740 to 840, a period of a hundred years. The second group of Kara rulers are known from charters of queen Dandi Mahadevi and of queen Tribhuvana Mahadevi and lands granted by them are in Kongoda, south Tosala and also in south Kosala. The exact dates of this second Kara group are, however, uncertain.[6]

The Somavamsi kings were originally rulers of Kosala with their capital at Sirpur on the Mahanadi. The first ruler of the dynasty was Tivara and inscriptional cross-references reveal that he was a contemporary of the Sailodbhava ruler Dharmaraja. Most famous of these Kosala Somavamsi rulers was Balarjuna also known as Mahasivagupta, whose long reign extended from 740-800.

The first Somavamsi king of Orissa was Mahabhavagupta Janamejaya who controlled interior Tosala with his capital at Vinitapura, modern Binka on the Mahanadi. Janamejaya calls himself son of Sivagupta, and while it is tempting to suggest that he was the son of the Kosala ruler Balarjuna Sivagupta, we find that there are too many objections to such an identification.[7] A consideration of the total evidence suggests that as much as one hundred years intervened between the two rulers. It appears that in this intervening period the Somavamsis migrated along the Mahanadi river and settled in Orissa. Somavamsi Janamejaya appears to have come into power soon after 900, and the three rulers who followed him take us upto 1022 when Rajendra Chola[8] invaded Orissa.

Sri Chandra Udah— an elusive inscription on the walls of the early Vaital temple at Bhubanesvar.



A damaged image of Vishnu in the shrine of the deserted temple at Ganesvarpur.



The entire problem of the history and chronology of the early Ganga rulers and specially of the era they used is a confusing one that seems persistently to defy solution. Dates put forward for the start of the Ganga era include 349, 494, 557, 626 and 877.[9] Further problems arise from lack of agreement of the actual readings of the numerals. Thus, one early charter appears to be dated in the year 51 and belongs to Devendravarman, son of Anantavarman, but Subbarao suggests that the year reading should be 251 and Raajguru proposes that it is 351. This example is typical of the confusion that prevails throughout in the unravelling of early Ganga history. However, on a consideration of the persuasive evidence of the Chicacole plates of King Madhukamarnava of Ganga year 526,[10] we would prefer to place the start of the Ganga era at 493. The confusion on the dating of the rulers ceases from the early eleventh century with the advent of the Eastern Ganga kings.

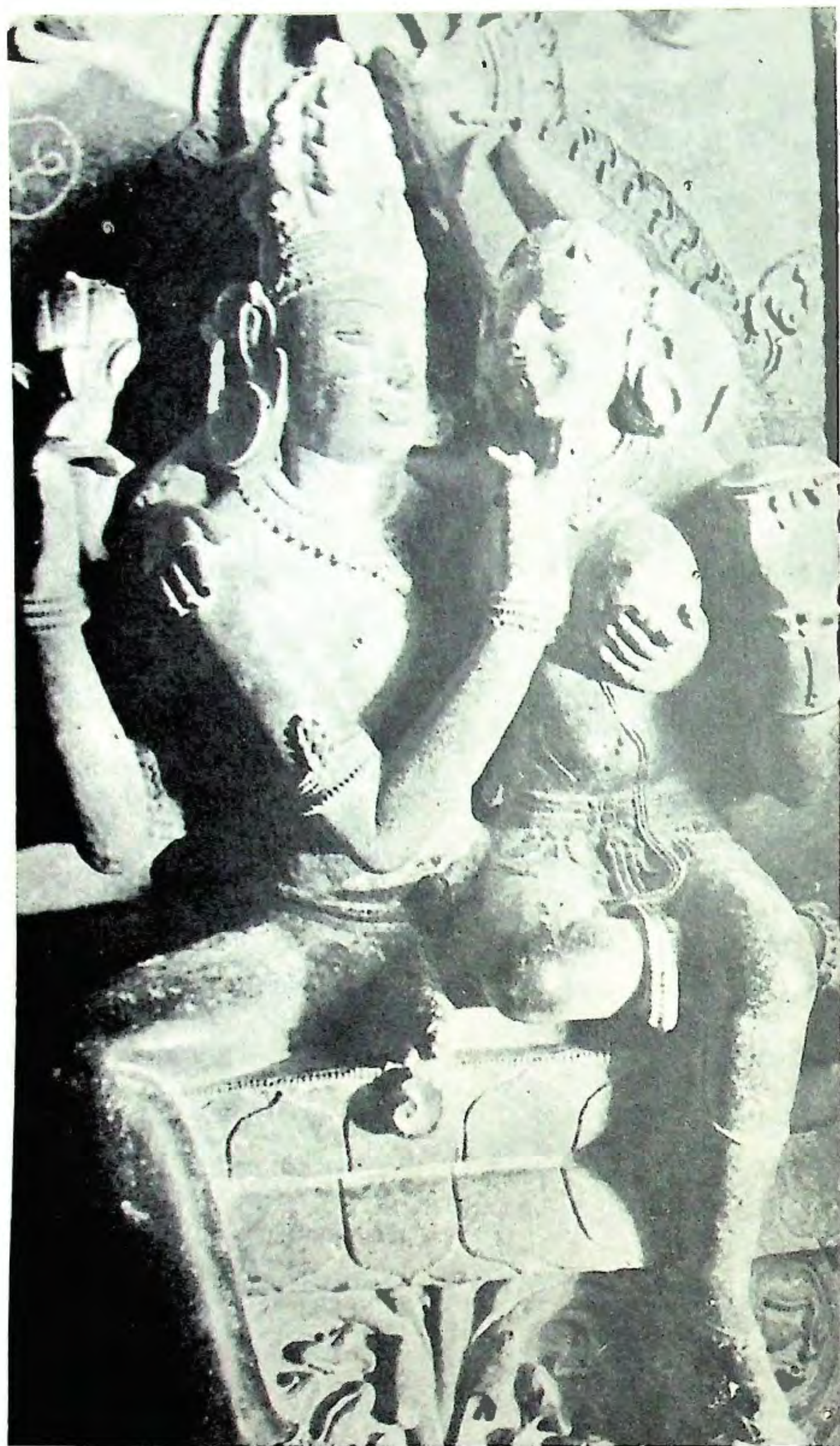
There appear to have been five groups of Bhanja rulers, each with a different genealogy and each ruling over different areas at varying dates.[11] They seem to have remained as petty chieftains in ancient Utkala, in interior Tosala and in the Ganjam district of south Orissa, ruling occasionally as feudatories of other dynasties, and assuming independence whenever the chance arose.



Panel of worshippers on the gateway of the Madhukesvar temple at Mukhalingam.

The Saiva saint Lakulisa flanked by his six disciples at the Sisiresvar temple at Bhubanesvar.





Delicately carved life-size images of Siva and Parvati from Khiching.

A very early group of Bhanja kings belonging to the third/fourth century AD ruled in the area of ancient Utkala. Apart from the single Asanapat inscription revealing their existence, we have no other records of these kings, nor do we know what happened to them. A second group of Bhanja rulers, known from two inscriptions of a Nettabhanja existed in the Ganjam district. On palaeographic evidence this group may be assigned to the eighth century.

The third and most important group of Bhanja kings ruled from the area of Baudh and Sonepur, and their use of the title *ranaka* (as opposed to *maharaja*) suggests that they were vassals of some other power, perhaps of the Kara rulers. The most important of this group, Ranabhanja, names his father as Satrubhanja or Gandhata. It seems possible that this ruler Gandhata gave his name to the town of Gandhatapati on the Mahanadi, now known as Gandharadi, which is the site of one of our important temples.

The fourth group of Bhanja kings ruled over parts of Utkala with Khiching as their capital. Villages granted are all in the Khiching area and the rulers refer to themselves as residents of *Khijjinga-kotta*. The complete absence of a title suggests that these Bhanja rulers too were subordinate to some other power. The fifth group of Bhanja rulers was located in Ganjam and belong to a late period that corresponds with the mature phase of the Orissan temple.

RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

Between 600 and 1000, Orissa was the land of Siva temples par excellence. Vast numbers of shrines were built in honour of the god worshipped in the form of a linga. This was the god whose beauty and whose preoccupation with love were extolled in Orissan inscriptions, the god

> whose matted locks of hair are touched by the soft rays of the moon with his tender hands [beams] resembling the clean fibres of a lotus stalk . . . locks in which the particles of ashes are separated by the overflowing water of the Ganga . . . locks loosened by Parvati's grasp during love-making . . .[12]

Most of the early temples which form the subject of this book are dedicated to Siva, the exceptions being two temples built for Vishnu, six shrines dedicated to the Goddess, a Buddhist monastery and a Jain site. It would appear, however, that in ancient Orissa, Buddhism, Jainism, Saivism, Vaishnavism and the worship of the Devi (Sakti cult) all flourished side by side in relative harmony.

Saivism, as an independent religious system with Siva as Supreme Being, cannot be traced back much earlier than the beginning of the Christian era, and the earliest Saiva sect is that of the Pasupatas whose prime teacher was Lakulin. The Vayu and Linga Puranas record the legend that Siva would incarnate himself as a *brahmacharin* named Lakulin and that he would initiate four pupils, Kukisa, Gargya, Mitraka, and Rushta into his cult.

The early Siva temples of Orissa display affiliation to this Pasupata sect, and all of them are embellished with carvings of Lakulin. In the Parasuramesvar temple, for example, we find three depictions of this teacher, two on the shrine tower and one on the walls of the *mukhasala*. He is usually shown accompanied by two or four disciples and occasionally by six of them.



All Orissan Siva temples contain a Siva linga within the main shrine. Associated with Siva are his wife Parvati and their two sons Ganesa and Kartikeya, and their images are placed in the three subsidiary-deity niches of all Orissan Siva shrines.

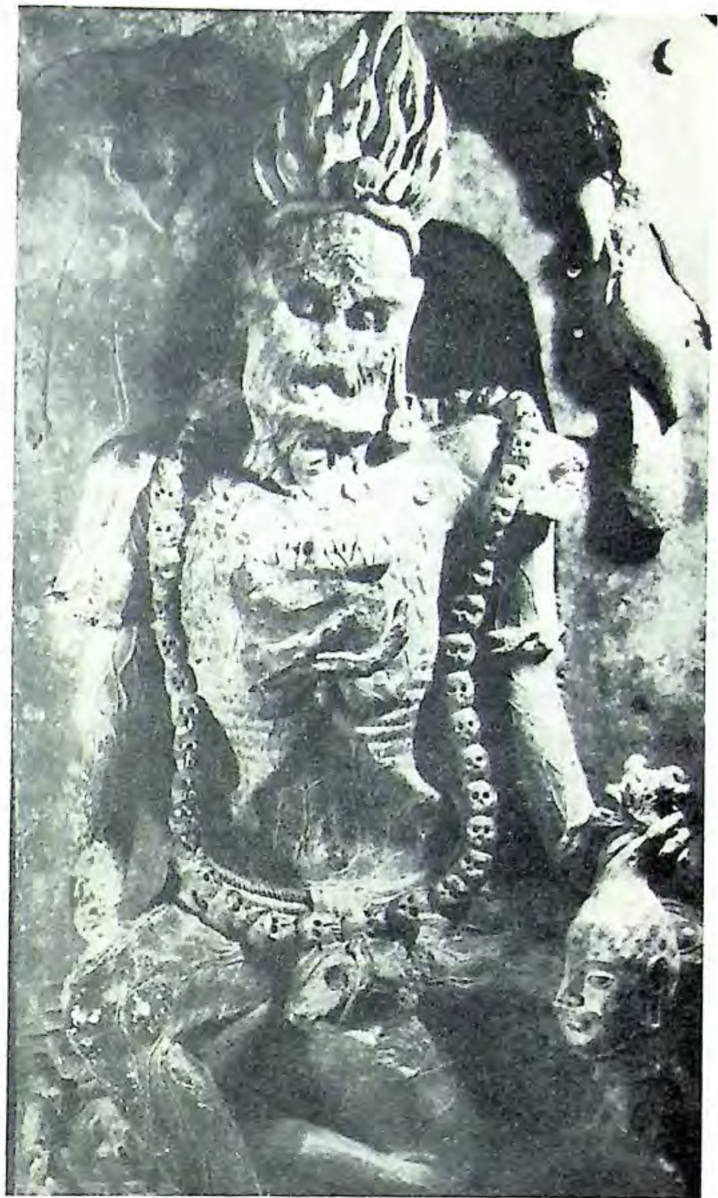
There are only two examples of Vishnu shrines among the early Orissan temples. At Gandharadi on the banks of the Mahanadi is the Nilamadhav temple to Vishnu with a crowning *chakra* on the shrine tower and a large standing image of Vishnu within the shrine. It is one of two identical temples standing on a common platform, the other being dedicated to Siva as Siddhesvar. This adjacent placing of Siva and Vishnu temples must surely reflect the happy co-existence of the two faiths. The second Vishnu shrine is the *panchayatana* temple at Ganesvarpur which again has a crowning *chakra* and a standing image of Vishnu within the shrine. Neither Vishnu temple belongs to the earliest phase of the Orissan temple and it appears that the emergence of Vishnu into general popularity is a relatively late phenomenon in Orissa. In the later period Vishnu worship certainly gathered great popularity.

The Sakti cult was popular in Orissa from an early date and the figures of the Sapta-Matrikas or the Seven Mothers are frequently found carved in relief on the outer walls of the Siva temples. We see Brahmi, Mahesvari, Aindri, Kaumari, Vaisnavi, Varahi and Chamunda, flanked by Virabhadra and Ganesa. The *Devi Mahatmyam* explains how these goddesses came into being to assist the Devi in her great war against the Asura Raktavija.

Five of our six Devi temples are dedicated to the goddess in her fearful form of Chamunda. We see her as an emaciated, skeletal figure with prominent veins and tendons, with gaping mouth and bulging eyes, and often standing on a corpse. The shrine of the Vaital temple is of special interest as it is unique among Orissan temples in having sculpted images on its inner walls. The entire set of Matrikas are there with Chamunda as the main image of worship. Other figures on the walls of the Vaital shrine include two fearsome Bhairava images, one of them indicating some connection with human sacrifice. This image is shown with a powerful knife in one hand and a severed



Row of *sapta matrikas* (seven mothers) from the Patalesvar temple at Paikapada.



Typical skeletal image of Chamunda (Parvati in her destructive aspect) wearing a garland of skulls and holding a severed human head in one hand.

human head lying beside him. Carved on the tripod below are two more severed human heads replacing the offerings of fruit found on similar tripods in the case of the fourteen other images in the same shrine. Both the Kapalika and Kalamukha sects of Saivism—offshoots from the Pasupata school—had rites that incorporated human sacrifice which appears to be included among the rituals celebrated in the Vaital temple.

The sixth Devi temple, at Chaurasi, is dedicated to another of the Matrikas, Varahi. Within the shrine is a magnificent portly image of the boar-faced Varahi with hair in tight curls all round her head. She holds a fish in one hand, and carved below her seat is her vehicle, the buffalo. It seems possible that temples dedicated to the other Matrikas also existed once.

Buddhism was probably introduced into Orissa during the reign of the emperor Asoka. We, however, know relatively little of its early history there. All Pali texts speak of Dantapura as the capital of Kalinga, but this place has not yet been identified. Dantapura—Town of the Tooth—got its name from the Tooth Relic of the Buddha that was enshrined there. After the decline of Dantapura (the tooth is said to have been transported to Ceylon), Pushpagiri came into prominence. This site greatly impressed the Chinese pilgrim Hsuan-tsang who visited Orissa in the seventh century.[13] From his description it is apparent that Pushpagiri was one of the popular seventh century centres of Buddhism in India.

Unfortunately, the exact location of Pushpagiri remains uncertain. It does not seem possible to identify the site with any of the three famous Cuttack hills—Ratnagiri, Udayagiri, or Lalitagiri—all three of which contain important Buddhist monastic remains. Several scholars of religion consider Orissa to be the home of Mahayana Buddhism. Possibly these new ideas and developments were encouraged by the early Bhauma-Kara rulers, who were devout Buddhists. Excavations at Ratnagiri, Lalitagiri, and Udayagiri have yielded a large number of images which testify to the popularity of Mahayana Buddhism in the area.



Varahi (the boar-faced goddess) holding a skull-cap in the shrine of the Chaurasi temple.

Jainism flourished from a very early date in Orissa. Jain tradition records that Mahavira himself visited Orissa, having been invited by the ruler to propagate his doctrines in that land. A Nanda king is said to have taken away with him a Kalinga image of the Jina,[14] which indicates that as early as 400 BC, Jain images were being made in Orissa. The emperor Kharavela was a Jain and under his patronage Jainism became strongly entrenched in Orissa. We know that most of the Jain caves on the Udayagiri and Khandagiri hills near Bhubanesvar were cut during the rule of the Chedi dynasty to which Kharavela belonged. The large numbers of stone slabs sculpted as Jain *tirthankaras* which we find scattered today throughout the villages of Orissa suggest that Jainism must have maintained this early popularity. We assume that the Jains built temples throughout the period we are considering, but only one severely damaged example remains at Subei in the Koraput district.

GRANTS AND RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF THE ROYALTY

Most of the rulers of Orissa between the period 600 to 1000 were staunch worshippers of Siva. We have ample evidence, however, of the religious tolerance of these ruling families. Saiva rulers patronised the construction of Buddhist monasteries, and Buddhist rulers actively supported the erection of Hindu temples. More than once a Hindu ruler, as in the case of the Sailodbhava king Dharmaraja, gave grants of land to groups of Jain gurus. Within the major Hindu religious systems too there was complete harmony and amity. The famous Somavamsi ruler Balarjuna was an ardent Saivite who gave generously towards the maintenance of Siva temples, while his mother Vasata was an equally ardent Vaishnavite who built the renowned Lakshmana temple at Sirpur. Religious tolerance was the norm throughout ancient Orissa.

Rulers of the Sailodbhava dynasty were ardent Saivites and all their grants commence with invocations to Siva. Their copper-plate charters refer to the

Sadly mutilated image of Buddha in the main monastery at Ratnagiri.



performance of many Brahmanical sacrifices, and the ruler Dharmaraja, for example, performed the Vajapeya, Asvamedha and Rajasuya sacrifices. Grants were always made on an astrologically auspicious day, often on the occasion of a lunar or solar eclipse. Sailodbhava rulers gave gifts of land and of villages mostly to Brahmins and only very occasionally to a temple.

The Ganga rulers too were devout worshippers of Siva. The earlier of these kings describe themselves as "those who have had their sins forgiven due to constant worship of Siva, the creator, supporter and destroyer of this world."[15] In record after record, these kings describe themselves as those who have

had the stains of the Kali Age washed away by obeisance at the two lotus-like feet of holy Gokarnasvami, the religious preceptor of all things movable

and immovable, the sole architect for the formation of the universe, who is established on the pure summit of the mount Mahendra.[16]

Ganga charters primarily gift villages and land to Brahmins, and only very occasionally is a temple mentioned. There is no reference to the actual construction of any shrine. Boundary limits of gifted villages are always clearly mentioned down to the last mound, tree and anthill. It is always stipulated that the income from the village is to be used for actual worship and for keeping the temple in a good state of repair. Invariably mentioned as part of all land grants is the injunction to future rulers to maintain the gift.

The early rulers of the Bhauma-Kara dynasty appear, however, to have been Buddhists. The first ruler, Kshemankara, is described in inscriptions as *paramopasaka*, his son Sivakara is called the *paramatathagatha*, and the third ruler is *paramasaugata*. All three titles describe a devout worshipper of the Buddha. The famous monk Prajna whom Subhakara deputed to journey to China with the *Gandya Vyuha* manuscript, studied yoga in the king's monastery, possibly the famous one at Ratnagiri. We know also that the renowned Buddhist teacher Krishnacharya flourished in Orissa in the eighth century. Buddhism then was very popular during early Bhauma-Kara rule and inscriptions reveal that a large number of monasteries were built during this period. At the same time royal charters reveal that the rulers actively contributed towards the building of Hindu shrines. For example, the queen Madhavidevi, wife of the devout Buddhist king Subhakaradeva, built a Siva temple at Jajpur.

Charters of the Bhauma-Kara rulers throw interesting light on the maintenance of temples as is seen from the details given in the Hindol plate of Subhakaradeva.[17] In this charter the ruler gifts the village of Noddilo with its rivers, ferries, forests and hamlets, and also the right of collecting taxes from weavers, cowherds, and others. This gift is made to the god Vaidyanatha enshrined in the temple of Pulindesvar, built by Pulindaraja, and the grant is made at the request of this same Pulindaraja who was apparently a vassal chief of the Kara ruler Subhakara II. The grant is made for the increase of merit to the donee and is to continue "as long as the sun, moon and earth endure". One half of the income from the village was to be used for actual worship—for the provision of items such as sandal paste, flowers, incense, lamps, the decoration of the image, and offerings to the god. From this half also, the servants of the temple were to be maintained and any repairs that were necessary were to be made. The other half of the income was to be used for the requirements of the Saiva ascetics—for their clothes, food, and medicines. From this same portion the family of Pulindaraja also was to be maintained. Similar donations were made by the Bhauma-Kara rulers to several other temples, and to Buddhist monasteries. Half of the income was always for worship and maintenance of the temple or monastic building, while the other half was used for the support of the priests or monks associated with the institution. Several Bhauma-Kara grants, however, were made directly to groups of Brahmins, without any mention of a temple.


Detail of a Buddha from Ratnagiri.

The first few Somavamsi rulers of Kosala were Vaishnavites, and the king Tivara, who founded the dynasty, called himself a most ardent worshipper



Narasimha (Vishnu in his man-lion incarnation) killing the demon-king Hiranyakasipu. Panel from Madhukesvar temple at Mukhalingam.

of Vishnu, and had a *garuda* as the emblem on his seals. The queen Vasta, mother of the ruler Balarjuna, was also a devout Vaishnavite. Her stone inscription at Sirpur gives a long eulogy of Vishnu and describes in three verses how Vishnu in his Narasimha *avatar* destroyed the demon Hiranyakasipu. In later verses mention is made of Krishna and of the future appearance of Vishnu in the form of Kalki.

The famous Somavamsi ruler Balarjuna was, by contrast, a Saivite and he called himself *paramamahesvara*, and had a bull as the emblem on his seals. The Senakapat stone inscription of the time of Balarjuna[18] commences with two verses, one in praise of Siva and the other describing Parvati. The third verse describes Balarjuna as a devotee of Siva while the fourth verse represents him as an incarnation of Vishnu, and implies the subservience of Vishnu to Siva. This particular epigraph records the construction of a Siva temple by a vassal chief of the ruler. There are also several grants towards Buddhist establishments. Thus one inscription records the construction of a *vihara* by a *bhikshu* named Anandaprabha and the establishment of a *sattra* (feeding-house) for the monks residing in the monastery. For the upkeep of this *vihara*, a rice field was granted.

Most of the Somavamsi grants record the gift of villages to groups of Brahmins. One interesting charter of the Somavamsi ruler Janamejaya records the grant of a village along with all its products including hidden treasures, to the Kamalavana merchants' association.[19] The grant proceeds to record that the merchants' association had bestowed the same village, after having registered it as a deed, to two temples, one dedicated to Lord Kesava (Vishnu) and the other to Lord Aditya (the Sun god). The income from the village was to be used for providing all things required for worship, for maintaining the



The Satrughnesvar temple at Bhubanesvar—probably the first stone temple built in Orissa, in the late 6th century (as restored by the Archaeological Survey).

temple in a good state of repair, and for the provision of charity.

The later Somavamsi rulers of Orissa were all devotees of Siva and invariably describe themselves as *paramamahesvara*. Their inscriptions commence with a whole series of ecstatic verses describing, not the glory of Siva, but instead the charms of their capital city Yayatinagara.[20] All these grants are made to Brahmins with only an occasional mention of any temples. The Bhanja rulers of the Baudh/Sonepur group seem to have been worshippers of the Devi, and in their inscriptions they style themselves as those who have received a boon from the goddess Stambesvari. This goddess is not one of the Sapta-Matrikas and was perhaps a *kula devata* or family deity. Bhanja grants too are made directly to Brahmins.

In general the land grants give little indication as to who was responsible for the actual construction of a temple. The Hindol plate of Subhakaradeva is one of the few instances in which the grant seems to have been made at the time of construction of the temple or very soon after, so that we are told that Pulindaraja who was responsible for obtaining the grant from the Kara overlord, was also responsible for the construction of the temple. In most

Hsuan-tsang. →

instances the grants are made to already existing temples, with no mention of the origins of that shrine. We assume that the ruling family responsible for the grant had no hand in the construction, as one might otherwise justifiably expect to find it mentioned in their charters. It appears that most temples were erected by private individuals, and perhaps by groups of individuals, judging from the merchants' association mentioned in the grant of the Somavamsi ruler Janamejaya.

HSUAN-TSANG ON MID-SEVENTH CENTURY ORISSA

In the seventh century the Chinese pilgrim Hsuan-tsang came to India and in the course of his extensive travels, he journeyed through Orissa around 638. He does not give us the names of any of the dynasties ruling in Orissa at that time, but his description of the country is of great interest. Coming from Karnasvarna in Bengal, the capital of the emperor Sasanka, Hsuan-tsang travelled 140 miles to Odradesa (U-ch'a). The circuit of Odra was 1400 miles and that of its capital was 5 miles. Hsuan-tsang's Odra must have included part of Utkala, north Tosala, and that part of south Tosala that is north of Chilka. Its capital was probably Jajpur. We have no historical evidence at all to suggest who was ruling Odra at that time.

Hsuan-tsang tells us that Odra had 50 Hindu temples, 100 Buddhist monasteries and 10,000 monks, all followers of Mahayana. A famous monastery named Pushpagiri is mentioned, with a stupa to the north of it. Hsuan-tsang describes a port in south-east Odradesa which was 4 miles in circuit and was used for passenger vessels from distant countries and also as a harbour for trading. He tells us that the city contained rare and precious commodities, and that outside it were five magnificent monasteries that contained many artistic images. The city he names Che-li-ta-lo (Charitra?) and its identification poses many problems. The location suggests the likelihood of the town being Puri, but there are absolutely no Buddhist remains there.

From Odra, Hsuan-tsang proceeded south-west, and travelling about 240 miles through forests, he reached the capital of Kongoda (Kong-yu-to). This kingdom, as we have seen, was at the time under the rule of the Sailodbhavas. Hsuan-tsang tells us that the circuit of the country was 200 miles and that of its capital about 4 miles. There were more than 100 Hindu temples, and the Jain population numbered nearly 10,000, but there were no Buddhists.

From Kongoda Hsuan-tsang proceeded south-west and after about 300 miles, reached Kalinga (ki-ling-Kia), the circuit of which was about 1000 miles, and that of its capital about 4 miles. The kingdom was full of dense forests and wild elephants. There were only 10 monasteries and 500 monks, all Mahayanists, but there were more than 100 Hindu temples. To the south of the capital of Kalinga (perhaps Mukhalingam) was an Asokan stupa. According to Hsuan-tsang Kalinga seems to have extended from the south of modern Ganjam district to the river Godaveri. Kalinga, at this time was probably under the rule of the early Gangas. From Kalinga, the Chinese pilgrim went north to Mahakosala, and from there south again to Andhradesa.



2

Craft Organization

Anonymity is a characteristic feature of the temple architecture of ancient India. In medieval Europe we hear of Brunelleschi, of Alberti, of Bramante and of the magnificent cathedrals and palaces that they designed and then supervised throughout their construction. Not so in ancient India. None of the names of the master craftsmen responsible for our splendid temples has survived. The reason for this is to be found in the ancient Indian concept of art as a craft—a concept different from that which existed in medieval Europe, and quite different from that which exists all over the world today.

Our modern concept of art and artists must be set aside to understand the social milieu of our ancient temples. Art was a profession learned and pursued like any other, and the distinction between the artist and the craftsman was unknown. The artist was a member of a guild of craftsmen along with guilds like those of potters, blacksmiths, and goldsmiths. Guilds of architects would obviously be more mobile than guilds of weavers or metal workers who formed a more integral part of the village system. These architects' guilds moved around the district, settling down temporarily at the site of construction for as long a time as was required. In the case of really large, ambitious temples, residence at the site for a decade or more may have been necessary. Art was a hereditary vocation and a part of the social order. With such an attitude one can see that a temple would be considered not the creation of a single man, but rather the combined efforts of a group, several of whom might be experts in their profession, each making his finest contribution to the final whole. As such, individual names would be considered not merely unnecessary, but irrelevant.

The guilds of craftsmen would work for any patron who requisitioned their services. On one occasion a guild might be asked to construct a Buddhist monastery, on another occasion to build a temple dedicated to the Hindu god Siva, and at yet another time to work on a Jain temple. No doubt they had to follow strict iconographical rules for different images and, for example, portray the god Siva with a trident, the Buddha with an *usnisa*, and a Jain *tirthankara* without clothing. We can often see clearly the hand of the same guild in monuments dedicated to differing faiths. There is, for example, so close an identity of style between the Sisiresvar Siva temple at Bhubanesvar and the Buddhist monastery at Ratnagiri that one is tempted to see the hand of the same craftsmen at work on both.



The vibrantly sculpted Vaital temple at Bhusbanesvar, in the barrel-vaulted Khakhara style.

It is necessary to emphasize the secular basis for the ancient religious art of our country. The artist-priest suggested by Percy Brown may have existed in areas like Tibet, but would have been the exception elsewhere. The guilds of craftsmen were quite likely comprised of men of differing faiths. They followed priestly instructions certainly, and as the centuries passed they were probably bound by increasingly rigid iconographical rules. Undoubtedly they were given certain set religious and mythological themes to portray. On an Orissan Siva temple they must have been told to depict a scene of Ravana shaking mount Kailasa on the front *raha*, and scenes from the Ramayana on the *bandhana* of the temple. However, they remained first and foremost artists, true to their innate and developed sense of the artistic, balancing,

for example, narrative scenes with purely decorative panels, or breaking up rows of figures with linear flowing patterns. In the spaces left to the artists' imagination, we find portrayed the themes they knew and loved, prime among these being the seductively poised maiden and the *mithuna* or loving couple. In this sense the religious art of ancient India is quite distinct and different from her ancient religious literature. The art came from the hands of secular craftsmen, while the literature came from the hands of monks and priests.

The idea of a temple originated centuries ago in the universal ancient conception of god in a human form. Such a form required a habitation, a shelter, and this need resulted in a structural shrine. In very early times such a shrine may have been made of wood, thatch and bamboo, but it soon became a sanctum of stone. There is a statement in the Mahanirvana Tantra to the effect that it is a hundred times more meritorious to build a brick temple than a thatched one, and ten thousand times more meritorious to donate a stone temple than a brick one. The stone sanctum was known as the *garbha griha*, literally womb-house, and it was a small room, often square, with completely plain walls and with a single narrow doorway in front. The minimal light that penetrated into the shrine provided an atmosphere of darkened solemnity and mystery, and within its darkness was placed the image of the god. This

The *mithuna* couple and the *kanya* were widely used by sculptors whenever a specifically religious theme was not required.







Plan of the shrine of Baidesvar temple.

image was sanctified by certain rites, and after this the divinity was considered in some inexplicable manner to have taken up residence in it.

The outer walls of the sanctum were often decorated with figural sculpture relating to the god within. In Orissa, the three outer walls of the shrine of a Siva temple always display an image of Siva's consort Parvati and of their two sons, Ganesa and Kartikeya. In front of this shrine was then added a small hall. Temples often face the east so that they are lit by the rays of the rising sun, and in very earliest times when there was no hall in front, the morning sunlight would have illuminated the object of worship.

In the temple architecture of northern India as a whole there is a basic uniformity of style that would suggest that certain common principles guided the building art over this wide-ranging area. Although there are distinct regional variations and specialities, there is yet a similarity of character in a temple in Rajasthan in west India and one in Orissa on the east coast. This underlying similarity was the result of the following of ancient texts known as the *Silpa Sastras*. These texts discussed various spheres of human activity, but one very important section dealt with architecture, sculpture and painting. Here we find detailed instructions for the construction of all types of buildings, and also rules of proportions for the sculpting of different categories of images. Although these rules *did* to some extent stifle initiative, they served the very important purpose of ensuring that a certain minimal artistic standard was maintained even when craftsmanship was not of a very high order. As far as the truly inspired craftsmen were concerned, they were able to produce masterpieces despite the various technical prescriptions.

The *Silpa Sastra* texts were compiled at a very early date and Varahamihira's *Brhatsamhita*, an early classic, belongs to the sixth century AD. Varahamihira himself quotes several earlier texts which, he tells us, he used in his own work. It was from such common origins that the various temple styles of northern India branched off, each developing their own speciality. In Orissa we have evidence of a number of specialised Orissan texts which emphasized the importance of various features that never became prominent in the Khajuraho area of central India, or in Rajasthan or Gujarat.

The Orissan temples seem to represent a largely independent movement since the treatment of the various units of these temples is of a rather special character, and the very names of *deul* for the sanctum and of *mukhasala* or *agamohana* for the hall differs from the standard terminology of *garbha griha* and *mandapa* used in the rest of India. One feature of the Orissan temple which sets it apart from all other temples is the *completely* plain treatment of the interior with all the carving being reserved for the exterior walls. Another special feature is the prominence given to the naga and nagini pilasters which are almost unknown elsewhere. Orissa seems to have been among the first areas to pursue the construction of stone temples on a large scale. Starting around 600, a whole series of stone temples were built in Orissa, and judging from extant remains, these were among the earliest in northern India. Stone temples in Gujarat and Rajasthan began to be built some couple of hundred years later, while those at Khajuraho were commenced around 950 which is the date for the Culmination Phase of our early Orissan temple.



An image of Chamunda with gaping month and protruding eyes, inside the shrine of the Vaital temple at Bhubanesvar.

The ancient *Silpa Sastras* refer to the designing architect by the name of *sthapati* and describe him as foremost of the four classes of craftsmen. The other three were the surveyor called the *sutragrahin*, the sculptor or *taksaka*, and the *vardhakin* who was a builder, plasterer, and painter all in one. These four classes of craftsmen were all to carry out the instructions of the *sthapaka* who was the supervising architect-cum-priest, responsible for laying down the specifically religious requirements of the temple. These four classes of workers are described thus in the *Manu Samhita*:

> The Sthapati should be fit to direct (sthapana) the construction and should be well-versed in all Sastras, the traditional sciences, perfect in body, righteous, kind, free from malice and jealousy, a Tantrik and well-born; he should know mathematics and the Puranas, the ancient compendia of myths etc., painting and all the countries; he should be joyous, truth-speaking, with senses under control, concentrated in mind, free from greed, carelessness, disease and the seven vices, famous, having firm friends and having crossed the ocean of the science of Vastu (architecture).

The disciple or son of the Sthapati is the Sutragrahin. He should always carry out the orders of the Sthapati, should be expert in all sorts of work, and should know the proportionate measurement by the cord (sutra) and the rod (danda) as applied to the whole building and its parts, the horizontal and vertical proportions (mana, unmana).

The Taksaka is so called because he cuts off and carves (taks) the large pieces and the subtle detail. He is also expert in working in clay. He should be qualified, capable, and able to perform all sorts of work on his own initiative, in the right way, devoted to the Guru, ever cheerful, and obedient to the Sthapati.

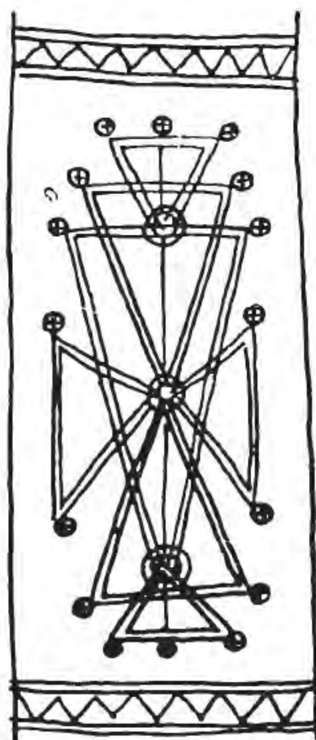
The Vardhakin is so-called because he increases (vrdh) (by placing together what the Taksaka has carved and by adding to the finished work, the painting) and he always follows the Sutragrahin.

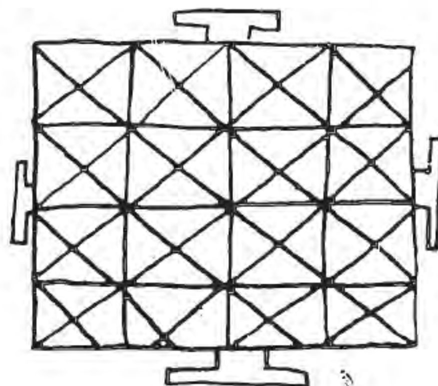
Without these four nothing can be undertaken. Therefore all these four, the Sthapati and the others, should always be honoured.[1]

ANCIENT ARCHITECTURAL TEXTS

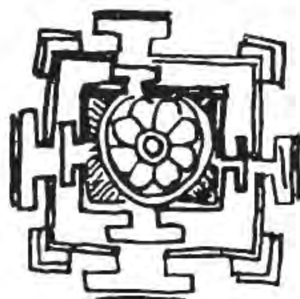
Orissa is fortunate enough to still possess more than one architectural text which is of relevance in a study of her temple architecture. All those who have so far written on her temples have used as their main source *Canons of Orissan Architecture* by N. K. Bose. This book lays down in compressed form the material from seven manuscripts, of which one came from the area of Lalitagiri and the rest from different locations in the Puri district. Five of the seven manuscripts are recensions of the *Bhuvanapradipa* which deals exclusively with temple architecture, while the other two manuscripts deal with the erection of thatched huts. The *Bhuvanapradipa* describes three types of temples—the *rekha*, *bhadra* and the *khakhara*. Much emphasis is placed in this text on the exact proportions and height of different parts of the walls. The text gives tables for the curvature of the towers, and parts of the manuscript are comprised entirely of mathematical figures. The text details 36 types of *rekha* temples, five varieties of *bhadra* temples and three types of *khakhara* temples with detailed measurements for each type. The exact thickness of walls is laid down and eight types of pedestals or base mouldings are described. Unfortunately, the *Bhuvanapradipa* is not of much use to us in our study of the early Orissan temple, as it deals primarily with temples of the mature, developed phase.

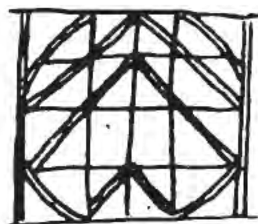
Of vital importance to us is the *Silpa Prakasa* (see Appendix), the Orissan architectural text recently discovered and translated by Alice Boner and Sadasiva Rath Sarma. It proves an invaluable aid in our analysis of the evolution of architectural and decorative details. We shall be making frequent allusions to this text, and the architectural and sculptural terminology we use is that of the *Silpa Prakasa*. The author was a certain Ramachandra Kaulacara, an Orissan architect living on the banks of the Musali river, and he frequently quotes as his source an earlier text called the *Saudhikagama*. The *Silpa Prakasa* is an incredibly detailed book, divided into two sections of which the first is concerned with the construction and decoration of the *mukhasala* or the hall, while the second part deals with the shrine and its tower.

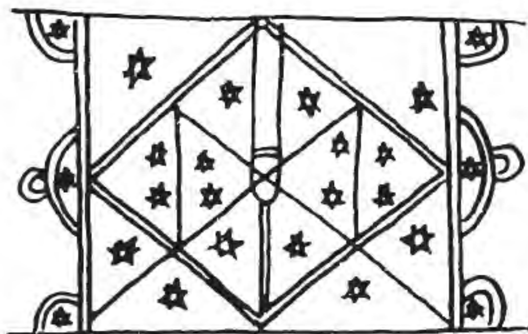




Yantras from the palm leaf manuscript of the *Silpa Prakasa*, an Orissan architectural text belonging probably to the 12th century, used as a guideline for construction. The *natambara yantra* (bottom left) for example, was used as a framework for sculpting a dancing Siva.*







The text discusses the various types of early Orissan temples, and provides detailed and specific instructions for the construction of each portion of a temple from base mouldings to sculptural decoration. A unique and distinguishing feature of the manuscript is that it is generously illustrated with line drawings which leave little doubt on the interpretation of the text. While the *Silpa Prakasa* describes different varieties of shrine towers, it concentrates finally on the *Ramagarbha* variety—the type that the author tells us he is "able to explain with knowledge and without hesitation."[2] This type is exactly exemplified by the temple at Chaurasi dedicted to the goddess in the form of Varahi. The startling conformity in style that we find among the early Siva temples, which the *Silpa Prakasa* describes as the *rathayukta* variety and treats only cursorily, can only be explained by the existence of other texts describing in detail that variety of shrine tower.

It would appear that the *Silpa Prakasa* was a popular text, since even today we possess three copies of this manuscript, each transcribed by a different person in the reign of a different ruler. All three are in the Sanskrit script and written in the Oriya language. Ms. 1, found at Puri, was transcribed in the village of Sobanapura on the banks of the Rishikulya river. Ms. 2 came from the town of Manjusa in Andhra and was written in the same village, described as "surrounded by the Mahendra mountains".

Ms. 3 was found in Srikakulam in Andhra and was written in the village of Narayanapura on the banks of the river Musali in the Asoka *mandala*. The dates of the transcribing of the manuscripts vary from 1731 to 1798, but the text was composed at an earlier date. The author mentions in his text a raja Viravarman who, as Alice Boner points out,[3] is mentioned in the *Madala Panji* as a cousin of the raja Devendravarman who was dethroned by the Gangas. It is possible that Devendravarman was the ruler overthrown by Anantavarman Chodanganga in 1077, and in this case, the *Silpa Prakasa* text could belong to the same date. However, the formulae laid down in the text must be somewhat older, since the author quotes as his source the earlier *Saudhikagama* on which he bases his work. It is strange that the book should have been copied in the eighteenth century. The style of temple it describes belongs to around the eighth and ninth century and never seems to have been exactly imitated at a later date, though it *did* provide the basis for the later mature Orissan temple.

TEMPLE CONSTRUCTION

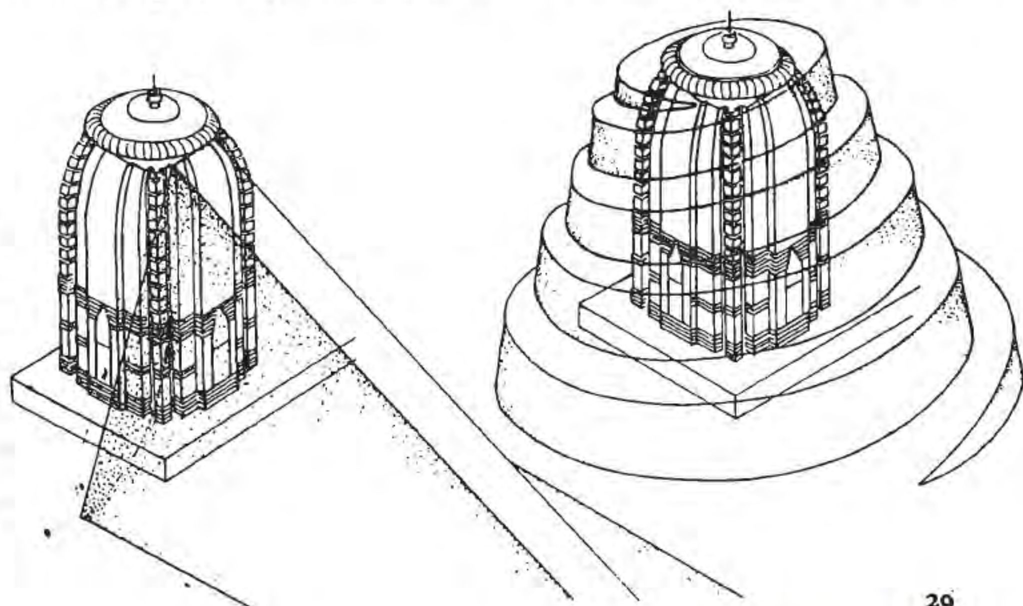
We know very little about the preparation of models to scale in ancient India, but one religious text contains a casual mention of an architect who displayed to his patron the model of a temple that he had constructed in Pataliputra. This reference implies that models of buildings were prepared prior to construction, and it seems possible that the practice was a more general one than we can gauge today. The main task of the master craftsman, the *sthapati* of the ancient texts, must have been to lay out the exact plan and elevation of the temple, as also its measurements, and to work out a coherent and unified decorative scheme. This presumably he must have done in consultation with his chief surveyor, the *sutragrahin*, and the chief sculptor, the *taksaka*. His next task would have been to organise his various

An ancient Orissan palm-leaf manuscript.

groups of craftsmen accordingly, as well as to handle the large force of manual labour that must have been required for the erection of any ambitious temple.

The preliminary work involved in the construction of any temple must have taken place at the quarry site. The Orissan temples are built mostly of sandstone, with coarse laterite occasionally being used for unseen portions of the temple such as the plinth or the inner portions of the courtyard wall. It was at the quarry that the huge blocks of stone were hewn to size, and the surfaces then finely hammer-dressed and so prepared that each block rested smoothly on the other. The prepared blocks would then be transported from the quarry to the temple site, and there raised into position by groups of labourers. The huge blocks of stone were laid dry, evenly and horizontally in courses one upon the other, and kept in position largely by their own solid weight and by their even balance. Occasionally grooves and offsets were cut into the blocks so that they slotted into one another, and very occasionally, in certain vital portions of construction, iron dowels were utilised. No cementing mortar of any kind was used. Such mortar was introduced into India by the Muslims and was an innovation quite unknown to the architects of our ancient temples. Block was placed upon block, and with the simple and basic principle of weight being transmitted directly downwards, our ancient architects were able to raise impressive temple towers.

The general practice in temple building in Orissa seems to have been to first construct completely the sanctum with its tower, the unit known as the *deul*. Only when this was completely finished together with its sculptural decoration, was the hall in front commenced. As the *deul* rose in height, the practice was to surround it with great mounds of earth which acted as a platform from which work could proceed further. An inclined plane was then made on one side and along this the large blocks of stone were dragged up for the construction of the upper levels of the *deul*. In the case of the famous Lingaraj temple at Bhubanesvar, this inclined plane led all the way



Ancient construction methods involving the use of solid mud ramps. At far right is a method by which the temple was 'buried' in earth as it progressed in height. The ramp shown at right was often 8 kms long and was used to drag the enormous crowning stone to the top of the temple tower.

from the quarry in the Khandagiri hills in the west up to the temple—a distance of nearly four miles. Such a length of ramp would be required to get the enormous crowning stone up to its crowning height of 150 feet.

It has been pointed out that several small mounds seen today between the Khandagiri hill and the temple are in fact part of the inclined plane constructed almost a thousand years ago.[4] We are told that at the last point of this plane a small laterite shrine called Chara Narayana was built, the word *chara* in the local language meaning an inclined plane. In south India at Tanjore, a similar ramp several miles long was constructed to build the famous Rajarajesvara temple, and along this ramp was dragged up to its final resting place 200 feet from the ground, the crowning stone, a single cupola of granite estimated to weigh 80 tons. In recent times when the local raja reconstructed the Khiching temple in Mayurbhanja, Orissa, he followed the tried and tested ancient Orissan method, involving the 'burying' of the *deul* in earth as it progressed in height. With such a system it is apparent that a temple was not first constructed of rough stone blocks, which were then carved once the construction was complete. The work of stone masons and of sculptors had to proceed hand in hand.

On completion of the shrine and its tower, the mounds of earth surrounding it were removed and construction of the hall in front commenced in a similar fashion. In the Orissan temples we notice that the joint between the *deul* and the hall in front is rarely exact. It appears that however accurately the designing architect might have planned this junction, it did not work out that precisely in practice. Such inexact joints may be seen on the most advanced and finest of Orissan temples where one might have expected an accumulation of experience to have avoided such a flaw. It is apparent that such a discrepancy was inherent in their method of construction.

It must be mentioned, however, that an alternative method of construction is shown on a sculptured slab that has today been set into the courtyard wall of a late temple in the Puri area. This slab, according to one scholar, may perhaps have belonged to the Sun temple at Konarak.[5] The panel shows an inclined plane constructed apparently of wood, with one end resting on the ground and the other on the highest part of a temple, with three pillars supporting the plane in between. A rectangular block of stone is shown being carried up this ramp, tied at both ends with ropes onto two carrying poles which, in turn, rest on the shoulders of four workers.

In certain parts of India fragments of carving have been found at the quarry indicating that sculptors sometimes worked at the quarry site itself. In Orissa however, this does not seem to have been the general practice. On several temples, both at Bhubanesvar and elsewhere in the state, the pattern to be portrayed has been indicated on the wall of the temple, but the carving has not been completed. This certainly indicates that the sculpting was done at the temple site itself. Often too, when examining closely a large carved figure, it is possible to discern the joints of the various blocks of stone which occasionally may happen to meet in the middle of a figure. In certain temples we notice an alternative practice in which the figures of the more important gods and goddesses have been carved from separate slabs of stone and then inserted into the shallow niches kept ready for them.

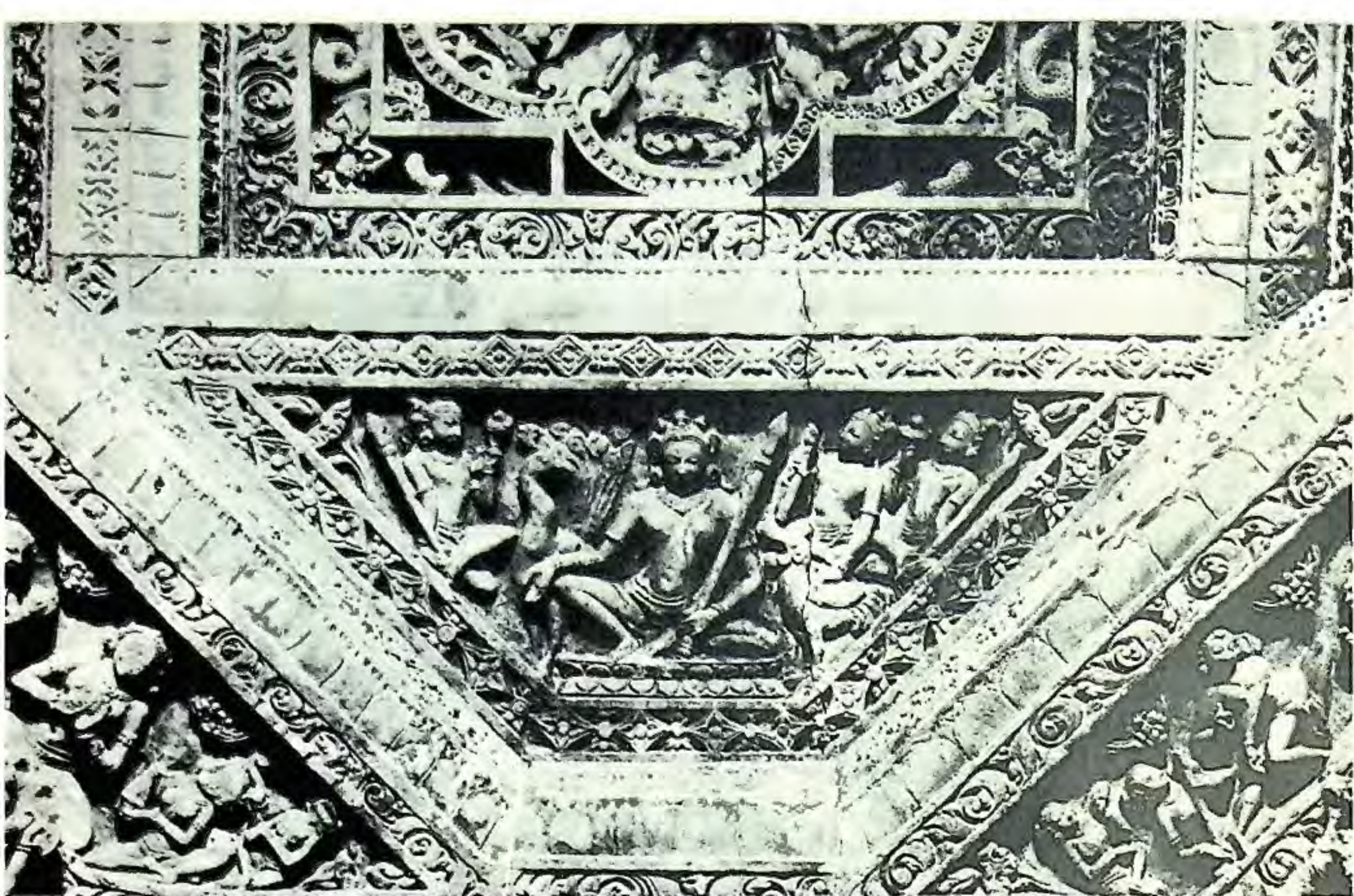




Images of Ganesa in *parsva-devata* niches. The image to the left has been carved from a separate slab of stone and inserted into a prepared niche, while the one at right has been carved from the various blocks of stone that make up the wall of the temple (note the visible joints in the sculpture).

Such a practice avoided the joints showing up within a single figure.

We must not underestimate the importance of priestly supervision in the building of a temple. The very choice of a site was governed by various complicated religious, astrological, and astronomical calculations, and of course, construction could be commenced only under a favourable combination of stars. Once the site had been chosen, the entire area had to be consecrated, and in particular, several rites had to be performed on that small piece of ground which was to serve as the base on which the sanctum was to be raised. The sanctum sanctorum of the temple, as we mentioned earlier, is called the *garbha griha* or womb-house. Before the temple construction commenced, the rite known as *garbhadhana* was performed. As in the case of a woman, here too this rite of impregnation and steadying of the womb is performed with earth. The earth receives the seed of the building and gives substance to it. *Garbha* in Sanskrit has the double meaning of both womb and embryo. The *garbha* deposited into the earth is usually a casket of copper, containing within it several precious stones, gems, metals, herbs, soils and minerals. The analogy with a woman is quite clear. The earth is the womb; the seed (the consecrated casket) has been placed inside her; the offspring, the temple, grows out of her and above her. After this important *garbhadhana* ceremony, the next most important ritual was the



The exquisitely carved ceiling of the *mukhasala* of the Muktesvar temple at Bhubanesvar.

laying of the first stone, the *adharasila*. An auspicious combination of stars was once again chosen for this and a special religious rite was conducted.

The world depicted on the walls of a temple was always a joyous one, and life was depicted as well worth living. Gods and goddesses, whether Hindu, Jain or Buddhist are always young, beautiful and full of the sap of life. The preference of the sculptor is for the bare body with only the faintest suggestion of drapery. After walking around the richly carved outer walls of an Orissan temple and glorying in the joys of living, one enters into the interior. Here, in contrast to the sharp glare of the sun, is a dim, soothing light and completely bare walls. The atmosphere is conducive to directing the thoughts inwards and towards a contemplation of the deity enshrined within the dark shrine, lit only by the flickering light of oil lamps.

The carving of a religious image was somewhat special and different from the carving of a secular portrait. A work of religious art may have been intended to be seen from the front only, but the sides and the rear *had* to be carved perfectly down to the minutest detail. A religious image would be incomplete if any short cuts were followed, and an incomplete image could not be enshrined in a temple. A similar sentiment seems to have applied to some of the finely carved ceilings of the temples. The Muktesvar temple at Bhubanesvar is a case in point. Its ceiling is exquisitely worked with several carved panels, yet it is in complete darkness and cannot be seen, let alone appreciated without the aid of artificial lighting. A flickering oil lamp is not enough to illuminate more than one small portion of it.

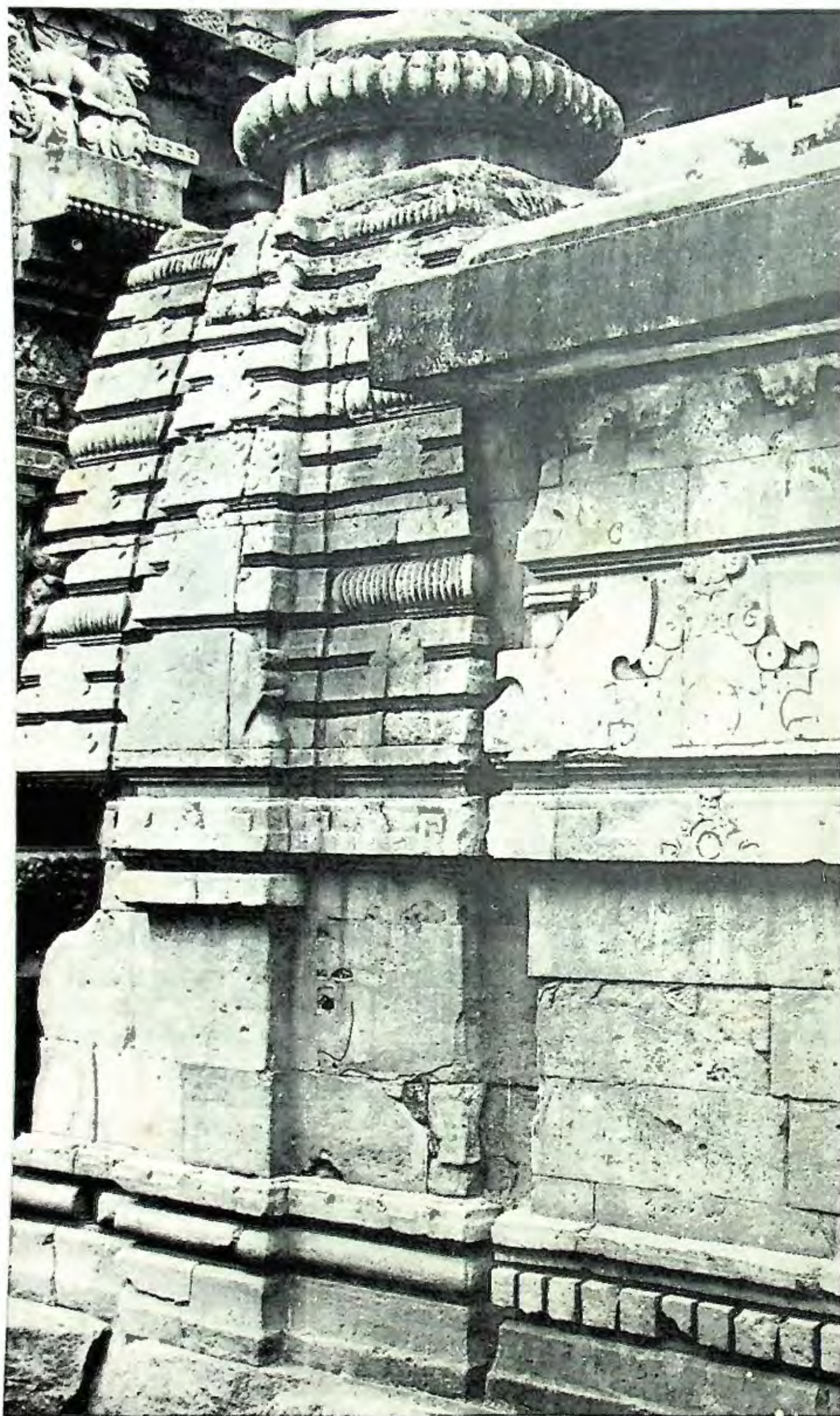
3

Architectural Features

The basic form of the early Orissan temple is that of a square or rectangular shrine which contains the image of worship, and a hall in front known as the *mukhasala*. The early *mukhasala* is rectangular with six or eight pillars supporting the roof and with an equal number of pilasters against the side walls. At a slightly later stage the pillars disappear, resulting in an open rectangular hall. Finally we arrive at the established form of a square *mukhasala* without pillars. As is usual throughout India, the temple generally faces east so that the rays of the rising sun illuminate the image of worship. Orissan architectural texts tell us that a shrine containing an image of Siva or Vishnu should be square, while a shrine dedicated to Devi should be rectangular, and this injunction is followed implicitly in all Orissan temples.

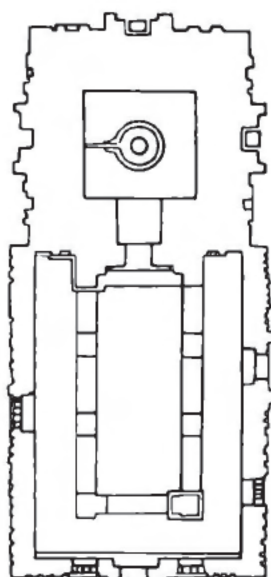
The earlier temples show an irregular placing of doors and windows. Thus the Parasuramesvar has four windows and two doors opening into the *mukhasala*. One of the doors is in the longer south side, while the other is in the west wall facing the shrine. The windows on the north and south walls are not placed symmetrically, and there are a further two windows on the west wall. The treatment of windows is not uniform as the windows on the north and south walls are of the simple square *jali* type, while the two windows flanking the door on the west wall are embellished with figures of dancers and musicians. In the Madhukesvar temple at Mukhalingam we also have an irregular series of doors and windows. One door is on the east side of the *mukhasala* facing the shrine, while another opens into the longer south side. Equally irregular is the placement of windows. There are no windows at all along the south wall which has the doorway, while the north wall has three narrow *jali* windows, each displaying a different geometric design. In later temples, the positioning of the doors and windows of the *mukhasala* becomes standardized. We enter through a single doorway in the front always facing the shrine doorway, and two windows are placed in the middle of the two side walls. The windows always display a *jali* design of one kind or another.

A variation on the standard plan of the shrine fronted by a rectangular *mukhasala* is to be seen at the Vaital temple at Bhubanesvar and the Madhukesvar temple at Mukhalingam. In these temples four miniature shrines with the standard Orissan style of tower are placed at the four corners of the *mukhasala*. These shrines are solid, have no entrances, and were never



The Vaital temple at Bhubanesvar showing the miniature shrine placed against the corner of the *mukhasala*. Note its bare unsculpted surface which contrasts with the richly sculpted shrine walls.

intended to serve any functional purpose. It is merely their elevations that are seen projected against the four corners, with the towers rising a little above the flat roof of the *mukhasala*. Such an addition lends a great deal of elegance to the *mukhasala*, but the experiment was apparently not popular as no later temple is embellished with such miniature shrines.

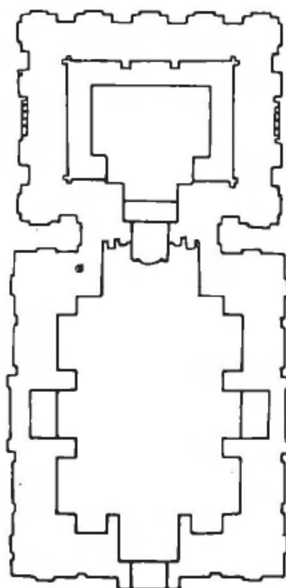


Plan of the Parasuramesvar temple at Bhubanesvar.

Another variation in floor plan is provided by the *panchayatana* type of temple in which the main complex of shrine and *mukhasala* is elaborated and extended with the addition of four shrines at the four corners of an open courtyard area. These four subsidiary shrines reproduce on a smaller scale all the features of the main shrine without the ancillary hall. This *panchayatana* variety seems to have been introduced at an early date in Orissa and we find such temples at Kualo, Paikapada, Suklesvar, Ganesvarpur and Mukhalingam. Soundara-Rajan in his book on temple architecture[1] informs us that it is the usual practice in *panchayatana* Siva temples for the corner shrines to be dedicated to Durga, Ganesa, Surya, and Vishnu. In all the Orissan examples, however, the corner shrines are also dedicated to Siva and they all contain lingas. In the Ganesvarpur Vishnu *panchayatana* temple, the corner shrines are empty. On the analogy of the practice in the Siva temples, we may assume that the four corner shrines were also dedicated to Vishnu and they must have contained Vishnu images that are today missing.

Some temples such as the Madhukesvar at Mukhalingam are more than *panchayatana*; they are, in fact, *astaparivara*. This eight-shrine variety at Mukhalingam consists of the main temple, four shrines at the four corners of the courtyard area, and three barrel-vaulted shrines that form part of the centre of the courtyard walls enclosing the temple complex. These three barrel-vaulted shrines at Mukhalingam seem to be dedicated to Ganesa, Kartikeya and Parvati—the standard *parsva-devatas* of an Orissan Siva temple. Within each of the four corner shrines is a *linga* and outside each a small *nandi* faces the shrine doorways, thereby indicating that all four are dedicated to Siva.

Plan of the Vaital temple at Bhubanesvar.



The Patalesvar temple at Paikapada is also of the *astaparivara* variety. Apart from the four corner shrines each containing a linga, there are two more shrines with lingas and one *saptamatrika* shrine. The Suklesvar temple is also perhaps of the eight-shrine variety, but this can be confirmed only after further clearance of the temple area. The *astaparivara* idea apparently had little appeal in Orissa, for there are no later examples of this type. Even the *panchayatana* did not prove too popular and there is only one later example—the eleventh century Brahmesvar temple.

Standing today at Bhubanesvar with only the principal shrines intact are the Svarnajalesvar temple and the three temples of Satrughnesvar group. Despite the gardens that have been planted in front of the temples of the Satrughnesvar series, traces of the plinth of a *mukhasala* may still be discerned in front of the main temple of this group. Panigrahi, who was connected with the restoration and reconstruction of these temples, maintains categorically that the floor of such a *mukhasala* exists, and we see no reason to doubt his affirmation. The Svarnajalesvar temple has recently been taken up for restoration, and we trust complete clearance of its frontage will lay

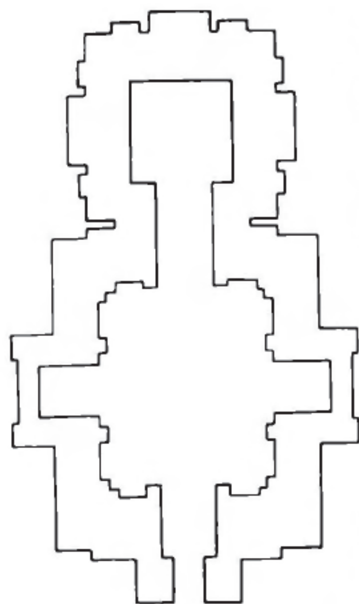
bare the plinth of its *mukhasala*. Panigrahi tells us that he even found a fragment of a grille-window in the ruins of the Satrughnesvar group. Unfortunately we have been unable to trace this fragment in the museum store. If found, it would prove our contention that the temples of the Satrughnesvar group and the Parasuramesvar, together with the Svarnajalesvar all belong together within a period of ten to fifteen years.

We have dwelt at some length here on these temples because it has been suggested that these represent an earlier phase of the Orissan temple in which no *mukhasala* was built. Fabri maintains that the Parasuramesvar marks "a decisive second step in the development of Orissan temple architecture, viz. the brilliant concept of adding a flat-roofed 'entrance shrine' or 'house of prayer' to the vimana",[2] and he titles his chapter on the Parasuramesvar "The Second Phase of the Orissan Temple".[3] The concept of adding a hall to a temple had already been achieved in Gupta times, and the idea of a shrine containing the image of worship with a hall in front in which devotees could assemble, is a very basic idea in the history of temple architecture. Certainly miniature shrines, built usually of plain blocks of stone, were often erected as single units, and they continued to be erected thus upto a fairly late date. We disagree with Fabri in his implication that

Below. The Madhukesvar temple at Mukhalingam. At left is one of the four corner shrines; at right, one of three barrel vaulted shrines along the courtyard wall.







Plan of the Muktesvar temple at Bhubanesvar.

single-unit shrines all belong to a very early phase. Nor can we agree with his contention that the Satrughnesvar group of temples—which in our opinion are not miniature shrines but major temples—represent this type of single-unit shrine.

Much comment has been made on the bad jointing between shrine and *mukhasala* in the Orissan temples, and the early Parasuramesvar temple as well as the late Lingaraj have both come in for this criticism. With bad jointing as the sole criterion for dating, some scholars have arrived at the untenable conclusion that the magnificent Lingaraj temple is earlier than the Muktesvar.[4] This bad jointing has also resulted in various theories about the later construction of the *mukhasalas* of many temples. In the case of the Lingaraj it is maintained that the artist would not have wasted his time and skill in sculpturing the facade stones if they were to be covered by stones of the *mukhasala*, and on this basis it has been suggested that the *mukhasala* is a later addition.[5] To us it appears that there is a very simple reason for the complete carving of the facade, even when it was known that portions of it would be covered by the construction of the *mukhasala*. It is generally considered improper to leave any portion of a shrine with its carving or other embellishment incomplete: an incomplete structure would not be considered ready for consecration. The Orissan architectural manuscript, the *Silpa Prakasa*, provides us with evidence on the completion of the facade of the shrine, and tells us that all parts of the front wall of the shrine must be completely carved.[6] It describes the shrine as the bridegroom and the *mukhasala* as the bride, and on this analogy, of course, both must be completely and elaborately decked. It tells us: "That place in front, where the bridegroom and the bride meet becomes the place of junction (*sandhiksetra*)".[7] The jointing of the Lingaraj in which so much of the carving is covered up, is then partly explained: the carving *had* to be completed and certain carved areas were intended to be covered up.

Much comment too has been made on the manner in which the shrine and *mukhasala* of the Parasuramesvar temple have been joined together. Fabri believes that even a cursory examination will prove that the two parts of this temple have not been built at the same time.[8] Comments of this type may be attributed to a lack of appreciation of what may be described as an early method of jointing as opposed to bad jointing. The Parasuramesvar displays an early method in which the hall was built up directly against the shrine, so that the front wall of the shrine served also as the back wall of the hall. In this method there is no intervening space between shrine and *mukhasala*. This must be correctly understood as part of the early phase of development, and it seems incorrect to maintain that the two units were not built as part of a single plan. It is likely that the Satrughnesvar group and the Svarnajalesvar also had *mukhasalas* built up directly against the front wall of the shrine and such is certainly the case with the recently uncovered Bhavani-Shanker temple. In such jointing, the sculptured niches on either side of the shrine doorway are included within the *mukhasala*, as we see inside the Parasuramesvar. On the basis of 'bad' jointing it is unnecessary to consider the *mukhasala* an afterthought or a later addition, for an afterthought too can be properly jointed if such a proper manner of

jointing were known. Fabri's suggestion that the shrine and not the *mukhasala* may be the later addition is totally unacceptable.[9]

A consideration of the floor plan reveals that the Markandesvar and Sisiresvar temples are one step ahead of the Parasuramesvar in the process of attaching a *mukhasala* to the shrine. Here the two sculptured niches of





the shrine facade, one on either side of the doorway, are clearly visible on the exterior of the temple. The *mukhasala* has its own back wall that commences directly from the large pillars flanking the shrine doorway. With the temples at Singanath and Gandharadi, we are one stage further ahead in this procedure, and the separate wall built to connect the front wall of the shrine and the back wall of the *mukhasala* now displays sculptured niches on it. At Singanath there is a river goddess on this wall, and by this stage the process of joining shrine and *mukhasala* is quite established. Fabri's remark on the inorganic planning of the Singanath temple[10] and his comment that its *sikhara* could have been built a few years later could only be due to his lack of familiarity with the temple. In the Muktesvar there is no further advance in the method of jointing shrine and *mukhasala*—indeed there can be no further advance. The shrine, *mukhasala* and joining area are all provided with a single common platform which exists also in the Vaital and Sisiresvar temples at Bhubanesvar and at Mukhalingam. Lowering of the ground area around other temples may reveal that this was a a more common feature than is apparent today.

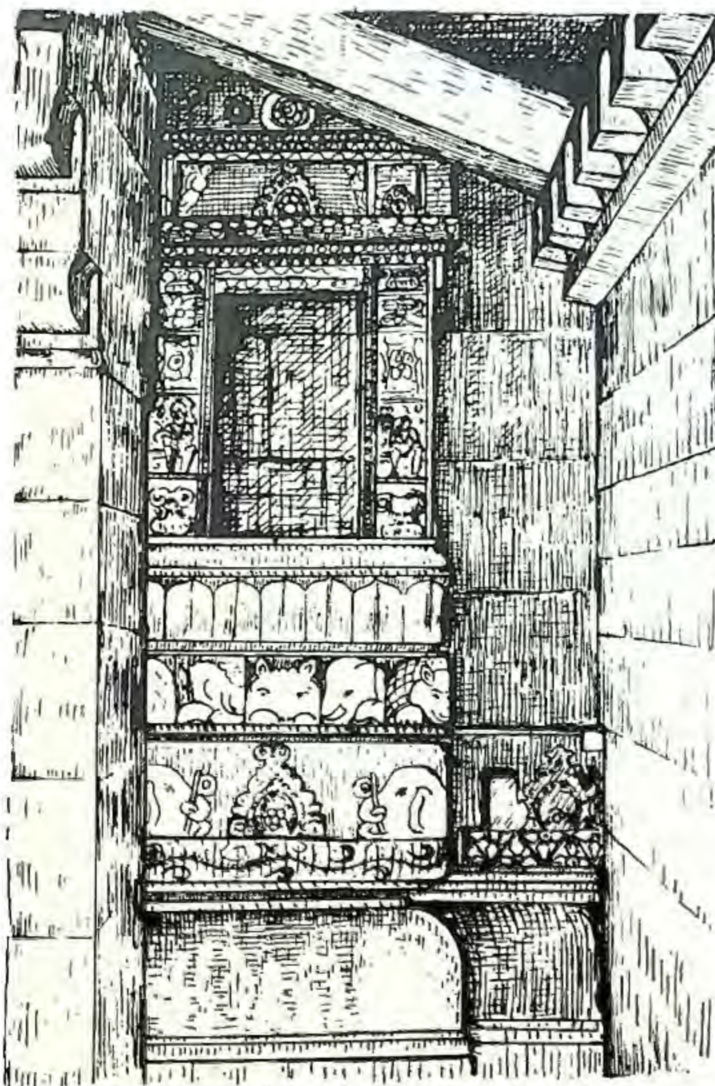
Above left. New Bhavani-Shankar, showing the abrupt joint between the *deul* and *mukhasala*.

Above right. Sculpture on the wall connecting the *deul* and the *mukhasala* of the Muktesvar temple.

A variation on the square *mukhasala* is provided by the Kosalesvar temple at Baidyanath on the Tel river. In the centre of the *mukhasala* is a raised platform with four highly decorated pillars, and there are pillared and raised porches on the two sides. One other temple near by, Charda,

seems to have been built on similar lines, and these two temples appear to be a local and regional variation on the plan of the square *mukhasala*.

The earliest temple then, consisted of a square rectangular shrine with a rectangular pillared *mukhasala* in front. Often there was more than one door opening into this *mukhasala*, and an irregular placing of windows. The *mukhasala* was built up directly against the shrine, and the entire front wall of the shrine, with its sculptural decoration, served also as the rear wall of the *mukhasala*. The next stage included the abandoning of pillars inside the *mukhasala* and a more regular positioning of one door and two windows. The sculptured niches on the front wall of the shrine now formed part of the exterior decoration of the temple, and the *mukhasala* had its own back wall built up to commence directly from the large pillars flanking the shrine doorway. Next came the addition of a decorated wall joining shrine and *mukhasala* and finally the *mukhasala* took on a square plan.



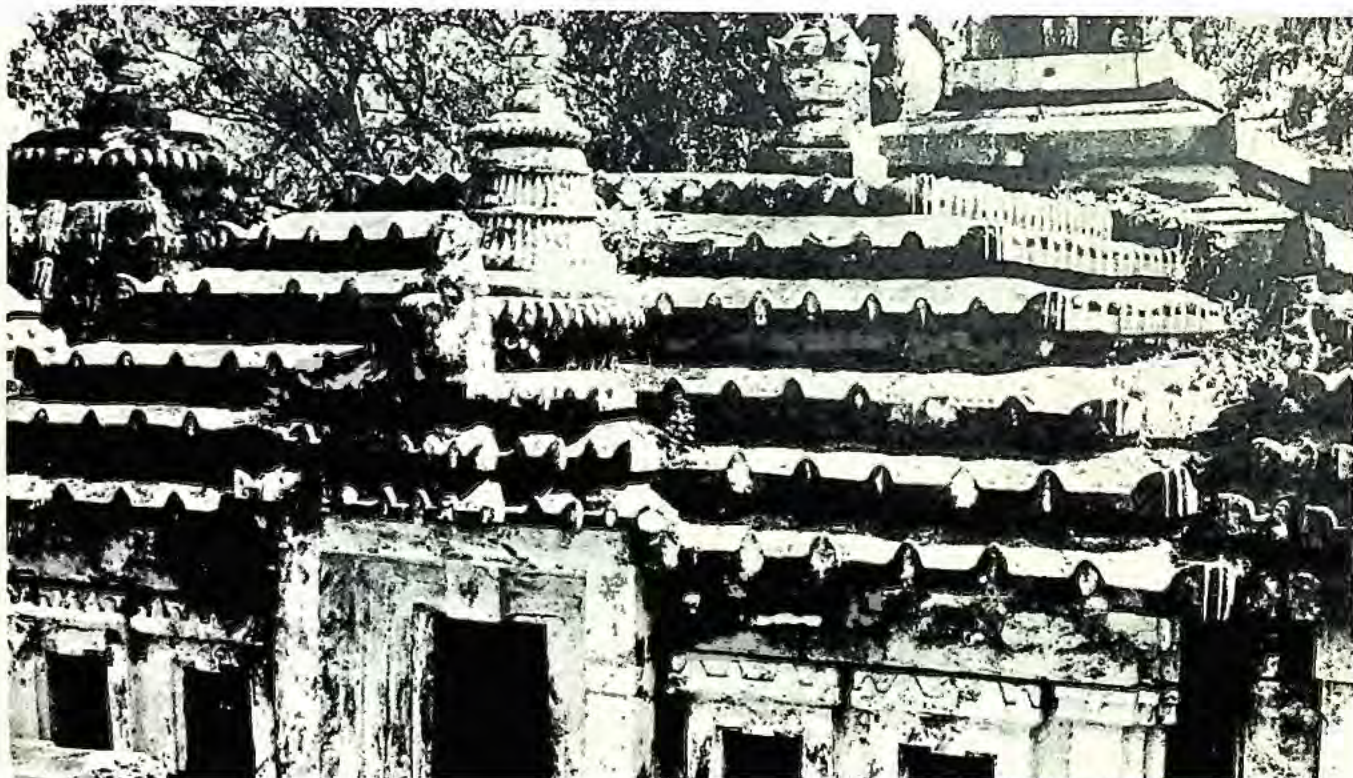
Interior of the Parasuramesvar temple revealing the manner in which the *mukhasala* is built directly against the wall of the *deul*.

ROOF OF MUKHASALA

It is an accepted fact that the roof of the Orissan *mukhasala* commences as a flat structure and develops into a pyramidal one. In our early temples it is possible to trace certain intermediary stages in this development. Typical of the earliest phase is the Parasuramesvar temple. We see here a sloping roof projecting beyond the walls of the *mukhasala*, with a clerestory above comprised of vertical uprights allowing light and air into the temple. A second and smaller roof, which is flat with sloping edges, tops the structure. The *Silpa Prakasa* tells us that square, rectangular and irregular-shaped slabs, placed in a beautiful slant, should be used for the lower roof: the irregular ones are for the corners, and the square and rectangular ones for the sides.[11] The clerestory is referred to as the *vayavya sthana* or air passage and when it is without decoration it is called *vatasangrahi*. The second flat roof is to be constructed of large single stone slabs. The different levels of roof as visible from within are called *lahiri* or waves and in the Parasuramesvar we see four such levels.

Similar roofs are seen on the Vaital and Sisiresvar temples, and while the roofs of the Mohini and Markendesvar are modern reconstructions, old photographs confirm that these too were of the same variety. The roof of the Singanath *mukhasala* presents us with a slight variation in that the roof has three rather than two levels each narrower than the one below. The Varahi temple at Chaurasi has the standard flat double roof, but a band of sculpture replaces the uprights between the two levels. It follows the recommendation of the *Silpa Prakasa* which tells us that the better type of roof is one with decorations, and that in the case of a Mother Goddess temple, this decoration should consist of alternating *kumbhas* and *mithunas* with a decorative frieze and a *jharavali* both above and below.[12] This is *exactly* how the Chaurasi roof is treated.

The Patalesvar temple at Paikapada revealing the transitional phase between the flat and the pyramidal *mukhasala* roofs.



A transitional phase between the flat and pyramidal roofs is provided by the Patalesvar temple at Paikapada. The rectangular pillared *mukhasala* has a final flat roof, but with six *pidhas* (tiers) narrowing up to this flat roof. These are not roof levels as in Singanath but six distinct *pidhas* as in the Muktesvar, except that ultimately the Patalesvar has a flat roof. There are separate *pidhas* above the projections of the two doorways and the one window, and these terminate in a crouching lion and *amalaka* after three *pidhas*. The culmination comes with the pyramidal roof of the Muktesvar where we find twelve *pidhas* in an uninterrupted row narrowing up to a *kalasa* at the apex. A seated lion is placed on the projections over the one door and the two windows.

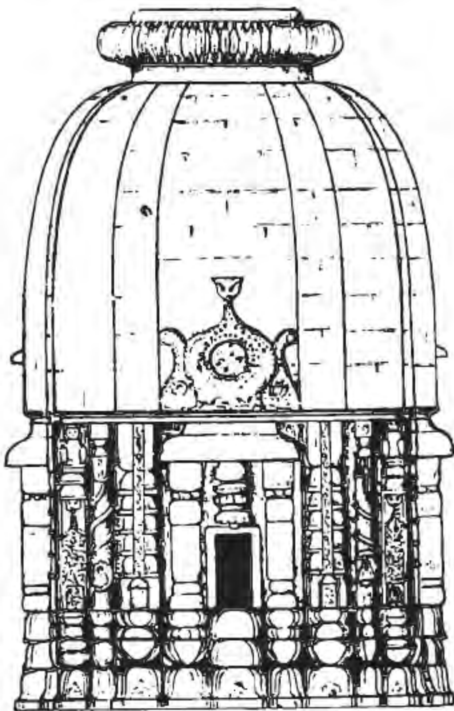
SHRINE ELEVATION

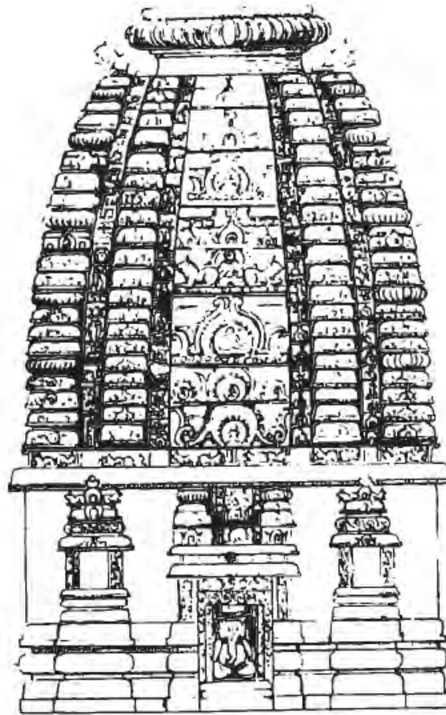
There are two basic varieties of shrines among the Orissan temples. The one represented by the Parasuramesvar and culminating in the Lingaraj is of the *rekha* variety. The other is the barrel-vaulted *khakhara* type exemplified by the Vaital shrine at Bhubanesvar and by the Varahi temple at Chaurasi.

Early Rekha Rathayukta. Our study of the early Orissan temple reveals two chronological stages in the development of the *rekha* shrine, with one final stage to follow later in the mature phase. We shall call the first or early stage of the *rekha* shrine *rathayukta*, a term borrowed from the *Silpa Prakasa.*[13] The *rathayukta* wall surface, the *bada*, is *triratha* or divided into three vertical segments, with a large central niche which projects slightly from the wall surface. On three sides this niche houses a *parsva-devata*—a god subsidiary to the deity enshrined in the temple but closely connected with that deity; on the fourth side is the doorway into the shrine. In a Siva temple the *parsva-devatas* are always Siva's consort Parvati and their two sons Ganesa and Kartikeya. In a Vishnu temple we find three incarnations of Vishnu, and in a Devi temple, three forms of the goddess.

Flanking this central niche are side niches carved into an imitation of a barrel-vaulted shrine and the roof of these little niches is embellished with a dotted double arch just as we shall see on the main shrine tower. Dividing the wall area (the *bada*) from the tower above the shrine (the *sikhara*) is a recessed section called the *bandhana*. This is often decorated with bands of *jali* alternating with *ghatas* or *mithunas*. On either side of this *bandhana* are mouldings decorated with *chaitya* arches and human figures, and edged with successive rows of dots and pendants.

The wall is purely vertical upto the *bandhana*, but above this the *sikhara* portion commences to curve gently inwards. The *sikhara* is *pancharatha* or divided into five vertical segments, though the intermediary segments are not sharply distinguished in the earliest examples. The central portion is known as the *raha*, the corners are the *konakas*, and the intermediary ribs are called *anarthas*. The central *raha* projects to the same extent as the *parsva-devata* niche on the wall below, and is decorated with an elaborate dotted double arch known as a *vajramastaka*. The front *raha* above the shrine doorway is the broadest and has the most important sculptural embellishment with images that correspond to the deity enshrined within.





Far left. Early Rekha shrine : Padmagarbha.

Left. Late Rekha shrine : Rathayukta.

The *konakas* (corner ribs) of the *sikhara* are divided into five horizontal units by *amalakis* (flat, fluted cushion-like shapes) and each unit has a further three sub-levels. At the top of the *sikhara* are four lions placed at the four corners. Above is a large *amalaka*, which in a Siva shrine is topped with a *kalasa* and trident, and in a Vishnu temple with a *chakra*. The majority of our early temples, including the Parasuramesvar, Svarnajalesvar, Markandesvar and Sisiresvar, are of this early *rekha* type, and throughout the instructions given by the *Silpa Prakasa* for the construction of a *rathayukta* temple have been closely followed.

Late Rekha Padmagarbha. In the late *rekha* shrine the walls which were earlier *triratha* now become *pancharatha*, and we shall follow the *Silpa Prakasa* in describing this variety as *padmagarbha*.[14] In the central *raha* of the wall is placed the projecting *parsva-devata* niche. The *konakas* (corners) are carved as broad flat pilasters decorated in four portions: the lowest portion is the *naribandha* containing the image of a *kanya*; then follows the creeper/scroll motif; above it is the *kirtimukha* with strings of beads; and at the top is a *bhara-vahaka* upholding the rest of the *konaka*. The intermediary sections of the wall, the *anarthas*, contain the side niches which are completed in imitation of a narrowing *pidha* roof, and down the centre of the *pidhas* is a vertical band of scroll-work. The niches themselves have shrunk considerably in size and importance when compared to the side niches of the *rathayukta* temple, and the same may be said of the *parsva-devata* niches.

Between the *raha* and *anartha*, and between the *anartha* and *konaka* are recessed portions known as *anurahas*. In these are placed naga pillars. The

naga or nagini, with a serpent hood behind the head, is shown human down to the hips, with the serpent tail wrapped all the way round the pillar. The projecting *parsva-devata* niches are flanked by pilasters decorated in identical style to the *konakas*. In contrast to the elaborate sculptural treatment of the *bada*, the *Silpa Prakasa* tells us that the *sikhara* of a *padmagarbha* temple is to be left plain, and that the only decoration should be the *vajramastaka* on the *raha*.

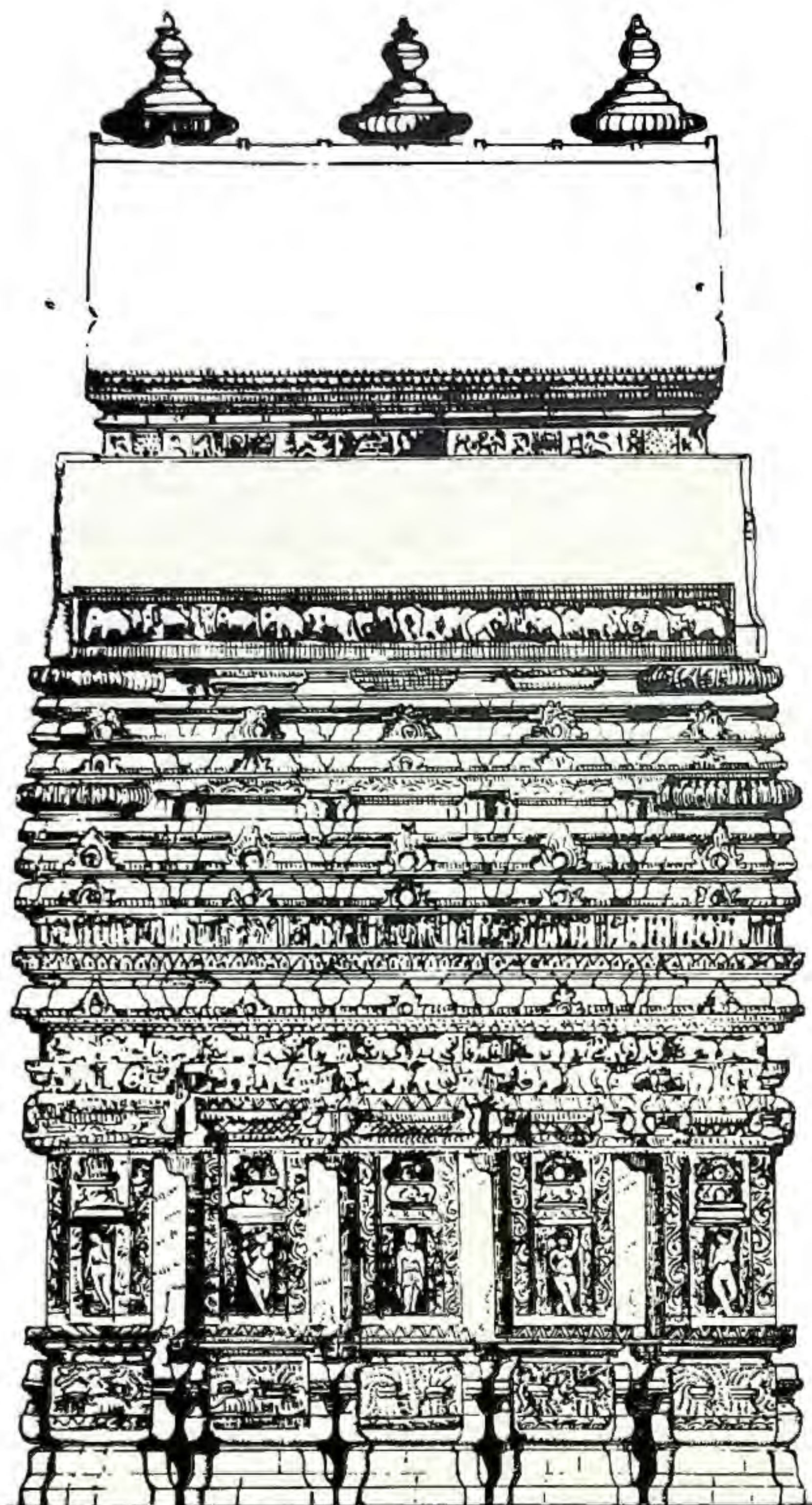
The Muktesvar which represents the culmination of our early temples, exemplifies a later phase of this *padmagarbha* variety. While the wall treatment is identical, the *sikhara* no longer stays plain. The *konaka* of the *sikhara* is once again divided into five levels, each of three sections. The *anartha* and *raha* are both decorated with an elaborate tracery of inter-twined *chaitya* arches. The large arch embellishing the *raha* now takes on a special form and is henceforth known as the *bho* arch. Leaning against the arch are *yakshas* with hair in tight curls, and crowning the arch is an elaborate *kirtimukha*. Superimposed on the tracery of arches above the *bho* is an image of the dancing Siva. All four sides of the *sikhara* are treated identically and the *bho* arch is to become a standard motif of the later mature Orissan temple.

The second category of shrine is the barrel-vaulted *khakhara*, and the *Silpa Prakasa* distinguishes between two types of such shrines, the *vaitalika* and the *kamagarbha*. The *vaitalika* shrine is exemplified by the Vaital temple at Bhubanesvar which exactly follows the *Silpa Prakasa* description in its construction and decorative treatment, and the *kamagarbha* is represented likewise by the Chaurasi shrine.

Early Khakhara Vaitalika.[15] The back wall of the *vaitalika* temple is divided into five niches of identical size, with images within each, and the text calls this part the *vigraha-bandha*. Each niche is completed as a barrel-vaulted shrine decorated with the familiar dotted double arch. Above the recessed *bandhana* is the *sikhara* portion which curves gently inwards from both sides and is bereft of any carving as the text specifies. On the front of the shrine and on the two sides are large *vajramastakas* filled in with figures of deities. The text tells us specifically that this type of temple is for the worship of the *matrikas* and that it is a tantric shrine, and such indeed is the character of the Vaital temple.

Late Khakhara Kamagarbha.[16] The Varahi shrine at Chaurasi is an exact reproduction of the *kamagarbha* variety of the *khakhara* temple. The shrine wall is *pancharatha* and is similar in treatment to the *padmagarbha* type of *rekha* temple. The main difference here is that both *konaka* and *anartha* are treated as broad, flat pilasters decorated with a scroll, topped with a panel of erotic figures. The *anurahas* are treated as serpent pillars or as flat decorative pilasters. The *sikhara* narrows gradually to reach the rounded barrel-vaulted top which is composed of undecorated blocks. The text describes how this *sikhara* is to be made narrower along the upper tier by moving each segment half a width inwards[17] and in the gaps left by this process, *kanyas* and *kalasas* are to be placed.

In the *raha* portion of the *sikhara*, the text speaks of sixteen horizontal levels containing two sets of *vajramastakas*.[18] The Gauri temple at Bhubanesvar is also a *kamagarbha* temple, although perhaps of a slightly later date,



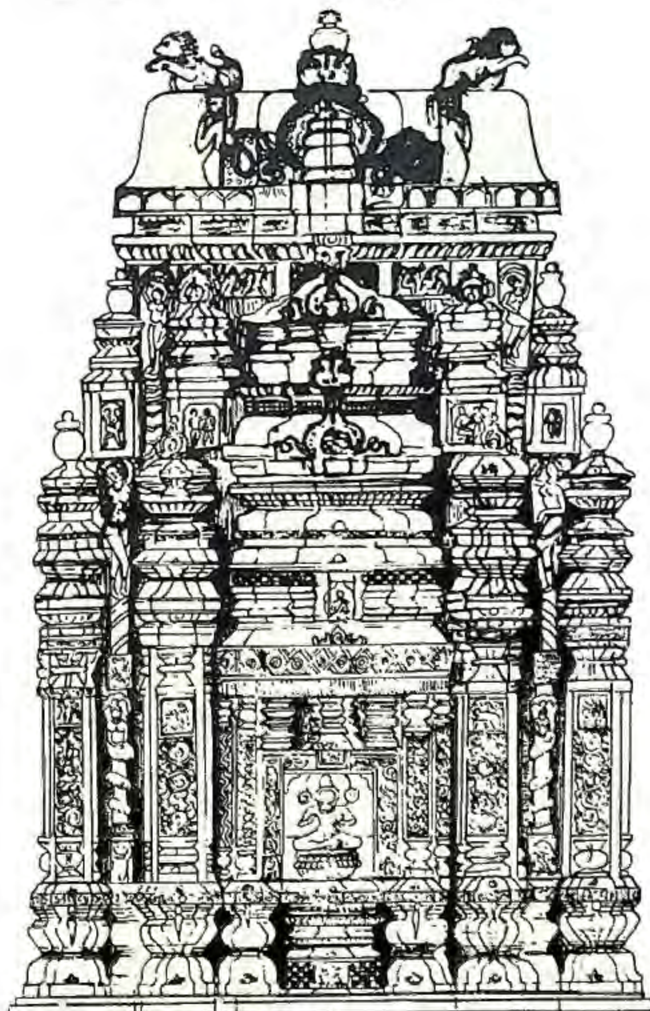
Early Khakhara shrine : Vaitalika.

since it has elaborate *bho* arches in two levels in the place of the two *vajra-mastakas* on the *raha* of the *sikhara*. This late *kamagarbha* type is closer in its wall treatment to the *padmagarbha* variety, and the *anarthas* once again have the side niches that were absent at Chaurasi.

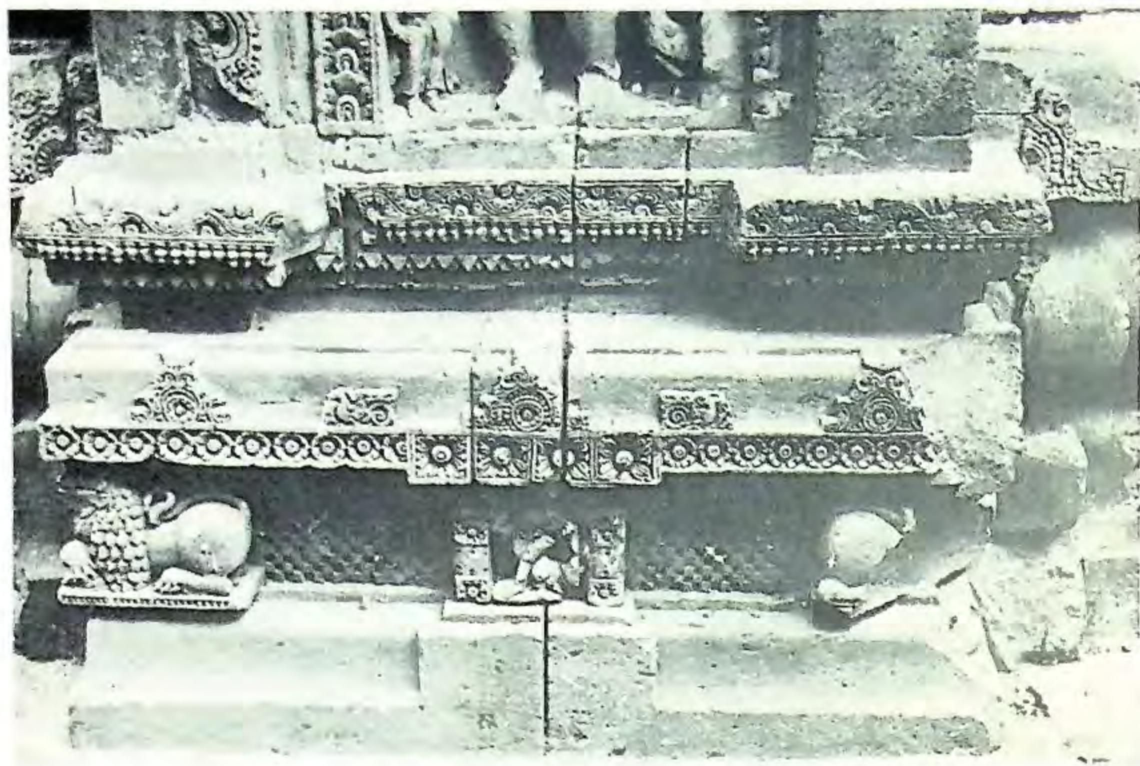
MUKHASALA ELEVATION

There is considerable variation in the treatment of the walls of the *mukhasalas* among our early Orissan temples. The surface treatment of the Parasuramesvar *mukhasala* is totally different to the treatment of the Sisiresvar, which in turn is quite dissimilar to the Singanath or the Vaital or Mukhalingam temples. This disparity is particularly noticeable because there is a basic similarity in the treatment of the shrine walls and towers. Apparently the early architectural texts allowed wide latitude in the manner in which *mukhasala* walls were to be decorated.

All along the walls of the Parasuramesvar *mukhasala*, interrupted only by doors and windows, are a series of shallow niches flanked by pilasters. Within this are placed a whole range of gods, including Surya, Lakulisa, Ardhanarisvar, Siva/Parvati and the Saptamatrikas flanked by Virabhadra and Ganesa. The remaining wall space above these niches is filled in with *chaitya* arches of varying sizes. The Sisiresvar *mukhasala*, by contrast, displays a totally organised plan with one large niche in the centre (replacing the windows) and two side niches, somewhat akin to the wall of the *triratha* shrine itself. Inexplicably, the adjoining Vaital temple has a plain unsculpted *mukhasala*. The four miniature shrines placed against the four corners of



Late Khakhara shrine : Kamagarbha.



the Vaital *mukhasala* are also unsculpted. The sculptural treatment of the Singanath *mukhasala* is completely different. Six decorated pilasters extend all the way from roof to ground dividing the *mukhasala* wall into seven bays, with the central bay containing a window, the bays on either side being sculpted in a manner similar to the window, and the remaining sections containing niches housing deities.

We first find a standardization of the *mukhasala* walls at Gandharadi and Chaurasi. In both temples the decorative scheme of the *mukhasala* is similar to that of the shrine. The *mukhasala* walls are divided into nine sections with a central window flanked by naga pillars, two *konakas* treated as pilasters decorated with the scroll motif, and three sets of *anarthas* on either side of the window. The *anarthas* are treated as niches finished in the manner of barrel-vaulted shrines, while the recessed *anurahas* are treated as flat pilasters. The similar treatment of walls of *mukhasala* and shrine is a sure indication of the advanced date of a temple.

BASE MOULDINGS

The base mouldings of the early Orissan temple can be divided into three major categories which we will term Groups I, II and III. It will be seen later that these three categories are also of chronological significance. Group I mouldings consist of three levels in which the topmost is square in section and is decorated with *chaitya* arches alternating with either *hamsas* or flying semi-divine couples. The second level is undecorated and rounded in section, and the lowest, also plain, is called the *khura* or hoof, after which it is shaped. Base mouldings of this type are to be found on several temples including the Parasuramesvar, the Svarnajalesvar, the temples of the Satrughnesvar group, Mukhalingam and Kualo.

In the case of Mukhalingam, the main temple as well as the seven subsidiary shrines and indeed the two gateways, all display this type of moulding. It is usual for both shrine and *mukhasala* to have the same moulding, but there is always a distinct difference in their height, and *mukhasala* mouldings are much lower. The topmost level on the *mukhasala* often corresponds to the top of the *khura* portion on the shrine. At Mukhalingam the mouldings of the main shrine, the *mukhasala*, and the miniature shrines projected against the corners of the *mukhasala* commence at three different levels.

Left above. Base mouldings below the *parsva-devata* niche on the Markandesvar temple. *Left below. Mukhasala* of the Singanath temple. Note the sculptural treatment of the long wall which has been divided by pilasters into seven parts.

In many temples with Group I mouldings, the *parsva-devata* niches interrupt the level of the base mouldings and extend all the way down to the *khura* portion. In such cases the *parsva-devata* niche has a single undecorated moulding of its own. Usually too the side niches have their own set of three miniature base mouldings, the entire structure then resting on the main mouldings of the shrine. The lowest of these side niche mouldings consists of a rectangular panel cut into independent little square blocks, carved usually with the fore-part of a lion or elephant. Occasionally such a block is carved with a human couple, a flying *gandharva*, or a hunting scene. At the *panchayatana* temple of Kualo, these elephant-and-lion blocks are to be found below the *parsva-devata* niches and they occur also below the side niches of the four corner shrines. At Mukhalingam, the blocks are not to

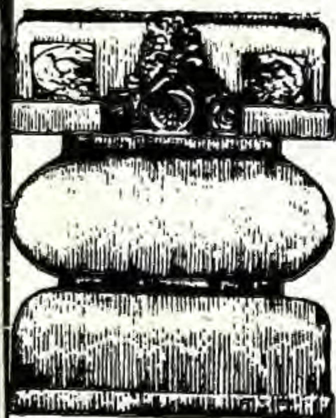
be seen on the main temple at all, but they occur on the four corner shrines below the side niches.

Base mouldings of Group II are in four levels and are more elaborate. The topmost moulding consists of a set of narrow receding levels, variously decorated with the undulating half-lotus band, a row of pendants, a rope-band, and stepped merlons. The second level is treated as an overflowing *purnaghata* from which scrolls flow onto, and connect with, a third rounded undecorated level. The lowest moulding is a high undecorated *khura*. This type of base is seen on the Vaital, Sisiresvar and Markandesvar temples at Bhubanesvar, but only on the shrines. The Vaital and Sisiresvar *mukhasalas* display Group I mouldings, while the Markandesvar hall is made up of plain undecorated blocks of stone, apparently without base mouldings. *Parsva-devata* niches now have a set of three mouldings of their own, of an entirely different variety. Between the second and the lowest moulding is a recessed band which contains the main motif—lions at the two corners, and a *bhara-vahaka* in the centre. The little lion-elephant blocks that are seen commonly with Group I mouldings, appear only occasionally on temples with mouldings of Group II.

The Singanath shrine displays four levels of mouldings which do not fit into either category examined so far, but which are best described as a variation of Group I. The two top levels, square in section, are decorated with lotus petals, arches, and rows of pendants, while the third and fourth levels are undecorated. The third level is rounded and the fourth is the *khura*. The base mouldings follow the projections and recesses of the *bada*, this being an advanced feature that seems to anticipate the next phase. The treatment of the base mouldings of the *parsva-devata* niches is akin rather to that of Category II. *Mukhasala* mouldings, however, are closer to those of Category I, with three levels of which the topmost is decorated with floral motifs and rows of pendants. The six pilasters that divide the *mukhasala* wall into segments, cut through its base mouldings.

Base Mouldings

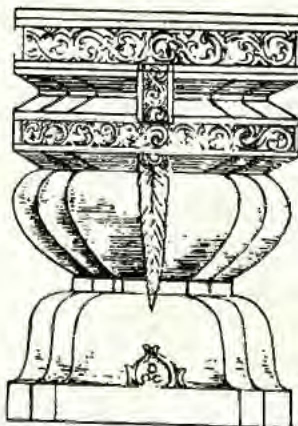
Group I



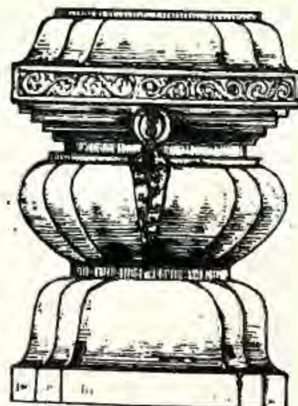
Group II

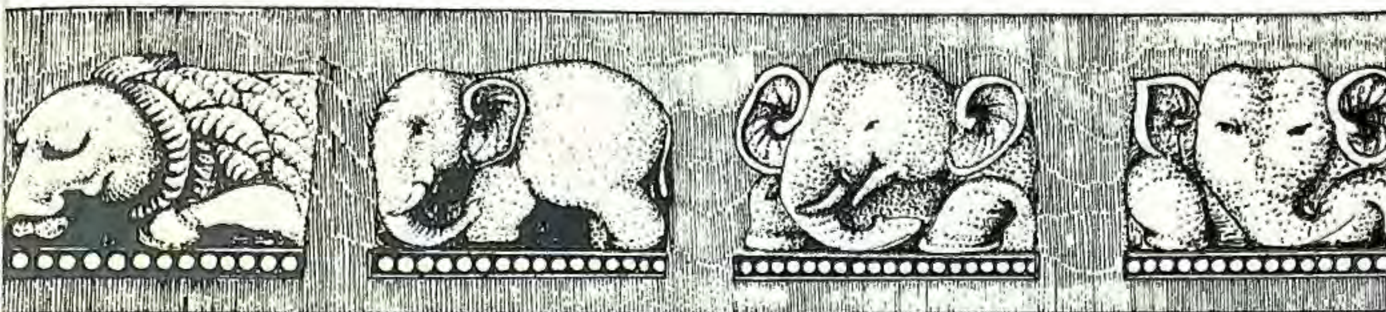


Group III (a)



Group III (b).







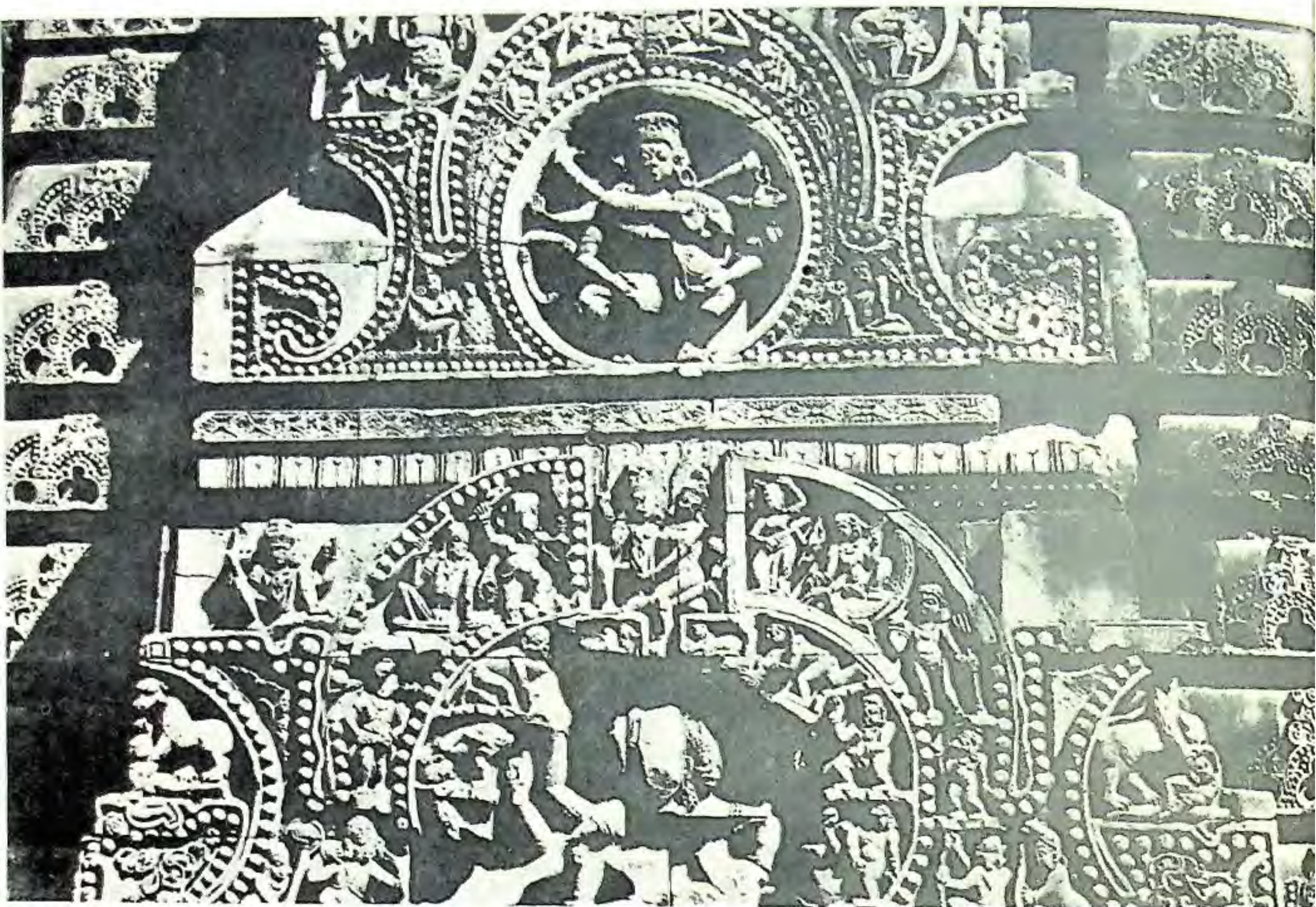
Mouldings along the base of the temples.

The advanced form of mouldings that we have classified as Category III is to be found at Chaurasi, Baudh, Ganesvarpur, and at Bhubanesvar on the Gauri, Tirthesvar and Muktesvar temples. The *Silpa Prakasa* describes mouldings of this category[19] and tells us that the base should be in three levels. The lowest level is the *khura* or hoof-shaped portion that is decorated with an elaborate *chaitya* arch motif, and the second is the *kumbha* or the pot-shaped section. The topmost level is either the *damarugarbha* (like a *damaru*, drum which has a narrow centre) which the *Silpa Prakasa* prescribes for a Siva shrine, or it may be shaped like a sloping roof in which case it is intended for a Sakti shrine.

We have classified these two types as Groups III (a) and III (b). With these Group III mouldings we find the appearance of a leaf-like strip that joins the various levels one to the other, and terminates at the top of the arch decorating the *khura*. The strip occasionally becomes broad enough to enclose a *kanya* within a dotted rectangle, but more often it contains a floral design or scroll. *Parsva-devata* niches do not interrupt the base mouldings but are placed above them. The portion below these niches is described as the *tala-garbhika*, and we are told that this should be divided into five horizontal levels of which the lowest was to be filled with images. In temples with Group III mouldings, the elephant/lion blocks are conspicuous by their absence.

FRONT RAHA

In the early temples such as the Parasuramesvar, Svarnajalesvar and the Satrughnesvar group, the front *raha* above the shrine doorway, seen over the flat roof of the *mukhasala*, is similar to the *rahas* on the other three sides



Flat front *raha* of Parasuramesvar temple at Bhubanesvar showing Ravana shaking Mount Kailasa, with Nataraja in the circle above.

of the temple. The only difference is that it is slightly broader and has a more elaborate *vajramastaka*. In the lower semicircular portion of the Parasuramesvar arch we see Ravana shaking mount Kailasa upon which are seated Siva and Parvati, while the circle above contains an image of Nataraja with ten arms. The *vajramastaka* ends in a large *kirtimukha*, above which is an image of Lakulisa seated on a lotus seat. The *Silpa Prakasa* tells us that the front *raha* should be carved with forms of the deity enshrined within, and for a Siva temple it suggests three forms of Nataraja—one angry, naked and with *urdhva linga*, and two in peaceful moods also with *urdhva linga*, one of which should have the left arm turned towards the right.[20] All the early Orissan temples have the peaceful form of the dancing Siva with left arm turned towards the right. The main temple of the Satrughnesvar group as well as the Svarnajalesvar temple, both of which have broad, flat, frontal *rahas*, display the same scheme of decoration as that found on the Parasuramesvar. The flat front *raha* also appears on the undecorated Mohini temple and at Mukhalingam where the dancing Siva is seen in the lower semicircular portion, while the images in the circle above represent a royal couple.

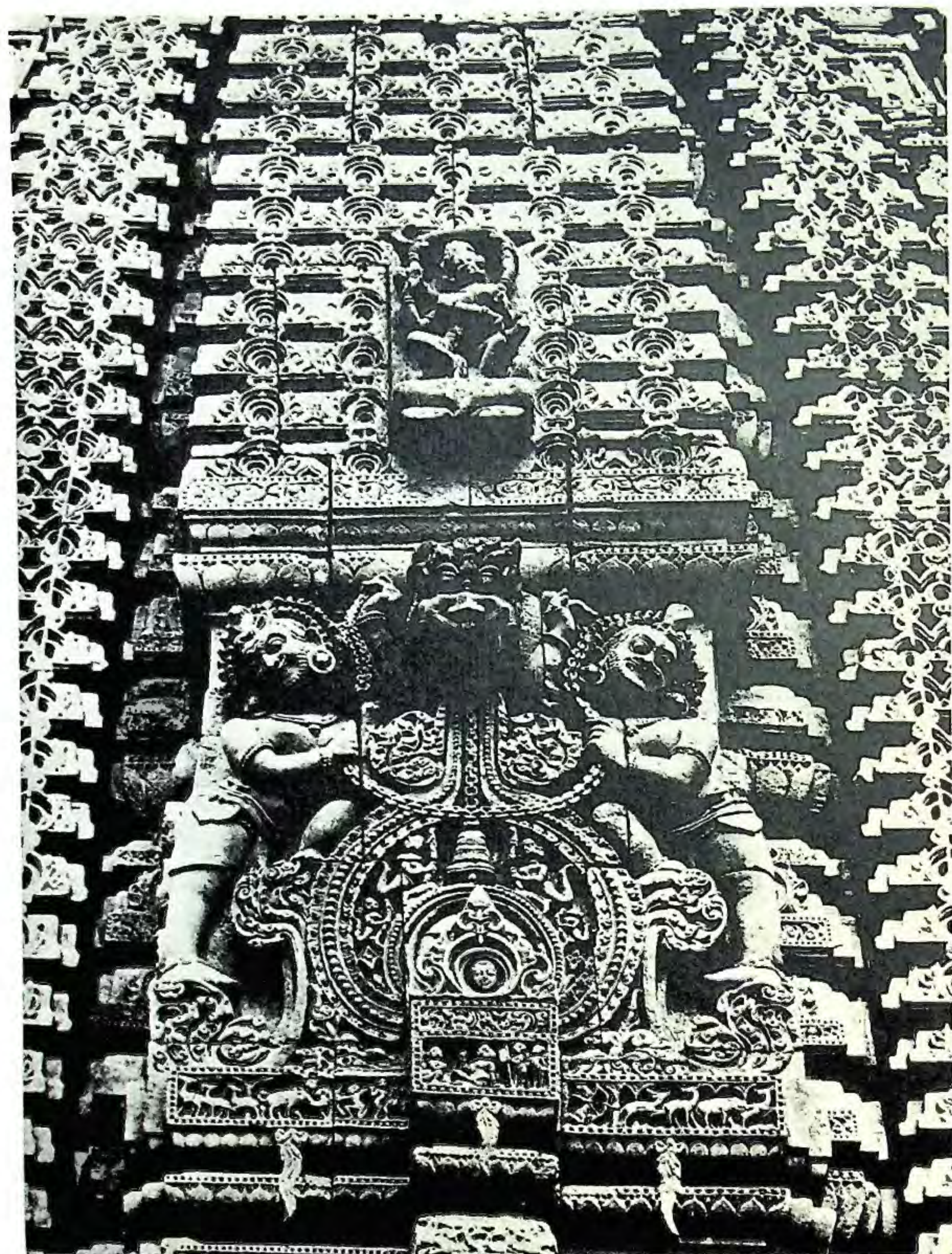
On the Markandesvar temple we first notice a very distinct projection of the front *raha* which not only stands out prominently, but is also quite different in treatment to the other three *rahas*. The lower, now rectangular portion of the elaborate double arch is here empty, but the upper circle

contains a dancing Siva. The arch terminates in an elaborate *kirtimukha* above which is placed a small *amalaki*. The Sisiresvar and Vaital front *rahas* have been constructed in a similar manner. The image in the lower portion of the Vaital arch is intact and represents Surya in his chariot, with the charioteer Aruna seated in front, and the seven horses shown below. The circle above contains the dancing Siva and beyond the *kirtimukha* is placed a seated lion.

At the Singanath temple, panels of relief figures, of dancers and couples have been carved along the sides of the *raha* projection. Above the *mukhasala* roof is to be seen only the circular portion of the double arch containing an image of the dancing Siva, and beyond the elaborate *kirtimukha* is a small *amalaki* and a *kalasa*. When the front *raha* of the shrine was originally sculpted, there was a complete double arch, but the third tier of the *mukhasala* roof appears to have covered up the lower portion of the arch. Standing within the *mukhasala* and looking above the level of the shrine doorway, one can discern even in the dark, the lower semi-circular portion of the *vajramastaka* containing the seated images of Siva and Parvati. As it is usual for the entire double arch to be visible above the roof of the *mukhasala*, there appears to have been, at Singanath, some sort of miscalculation in determining the height of the *vajramastaka* on the *raha* as compared to the roof level of the *mukhasala*.

Projecting front *raha* of Markandesvar temple at Bhubanesvar.





← Flat front *raha* of the Muktesvar temple at Bhubanesvar with the typical *bho* arch.

At the Chaurasi temple too we see the projecting front *raha*. The *Silpa Prakasa* tells us that the *rahas* of the *sikhara* are to be sculpted in sixteen horizontal levels with the joint between shrine and *mukhasala* occurring at the sixth level which is also the level at which the *vajramastaka* commences. The text then prescribes for a *kamagarbha* temple a second *vajramastaka* which should commence at the thirteenth level.[21] When we turn to the Muktesvar temple we see a reappearance of the flat front *raha*, identical to the other three *rahas*. All the *rahas* display the elaborate *bho* arch with a small Nataraja image above, while the *bho* on the front *raha* has, in addition, a seated lion looking out over the pyramidal *mukhasala* roof.

It would seem that the earliest temples had a broad, flat, frontal *raha*, which was distinguished from the other three *rahas* only by its more elaborate *vajramastaka*. With a slight advance in construction, the idea seems to have risen of projecting the front *raha* of the temple over the flat roof of the *mukhasala*. However, with the rise in the height of the *mukhasala* roof and with the establishment of a pyramidal roof for this hall, the front *raha* once again became flat and by this stage the *vajramastaka* had been converted into the *bho* arch.

PILLARS

The interior pillars of Orissan temples are treated in a utilitarian manner. The shafts are a plain square that occasionally became octagonal in the centre, and capitals consist of a square abacus with a roll below it. Very rarely, as at Mohanagiri, the pillar is treated in a decorative manner starting out as a square and then becoming a *ghata* with large leafy scrolls overflowing at the four corners. There follow several decorative mouldings, below which the remaining half of the shaft is again a plain square. The only examples of highly decorated pillars are in the *mukhasalas* of the Kosalesvar and Charda temples. The pillar, a square shaft arising from an overflowing *purnaghata*, becomes octagonal, with alternate facets decorated with *kirtimukhas* holding pearl strings caught up by rearing lions. The abacus block is also decorated with *kirtimukhas*.

Naga pillars are not to be seen in the Parasuramesvar, Satrughnesvar group, Svarnajalesvar, Vaital, Sisiresvar and Markandesvar temples at Bhubanesvar, nor at Singanath, Kualo, or Mukhalingam. They appear for the first time on the twin temples at Gandharadi and on the Varahi temple at Chaurasi, where we find massive naga and nagini pillars flanking the entrance doorway and the windows of the *mukhasala*. Below the snake hood is the human figure down to the hips and the snake winds itself round the pillar a couple of times with the end of its tail in front. At Gandharadi the pillar rests on a square block carved with two lions crouching on two elephants, while at Chaurasi the pillars arise out of a decorated pot-like base.

At Chaurasi and on the Tirthesvar, Gauri and Muktesvar temples, we find naga pilasters decorating the *anurahas* of the shrine. On the Muktesvar the *anurahas* of the *mukhasala* also have these pillars. In all these temples the naga pillars have at their base two lions crouching on two elephants. It is strange that a base of this type for naga pillars is not mentioned in the *Silpa Prakasa*. Above the nagas there is usually a beaded garland and then

a *bharavahaka*. The scales of the nagas are always very clearly depicted. At Gandharadi and Chaurasi the nagas are ascending with their tails at the bottom of the pillar, while on the Gauri, Tirthesvar, and Muktesvar temples they are descending with their tails at the top of the pillar. They hold a varied assortment of objects in their hands including a garland, flowers and musical instruments.

On the walls of the *mukhasala* of the Kosalesvar temple at Baidyanath, there are naga pillars with nagas in purely reptile form with a single hood. The *Silpa Prakasa* mentions this variation,[22] but this is our only Orissan instance of such a type. Naga pilasters were carved at the Ratnagiri monastery too, during its second phase of development when decorated stone cells were erected. At the ruined *panchayatana* temple at Ganesvarpur we find remnants of two massive naga pillars which were perhaps placed at the entrance.

The *Silpa Prakasa* tells us categorically that serpent pillars should be placed on either side of the entrance to a temple, the pillars being as high as the wall and a quarter of the entrance in width. It specifies that when windows are made only of fret-work, they should be flanked by naga pillars and it proceeds to describe how such pillars should be made. There should be seven or five hoods with the central hood somewhat larger than the side ones. The tail-end must always be visible in front and the naga or nagini pilasters may be made with the snake head either above or below. The scales of the snake should be clearly visible in the carving, and plough and pestle should be placed in the hands of these nagas. The text informs us that the

Below at left are nagini pilasters, and at right dancing figures from Ratnagiri, closely comparable to the early grille windows.





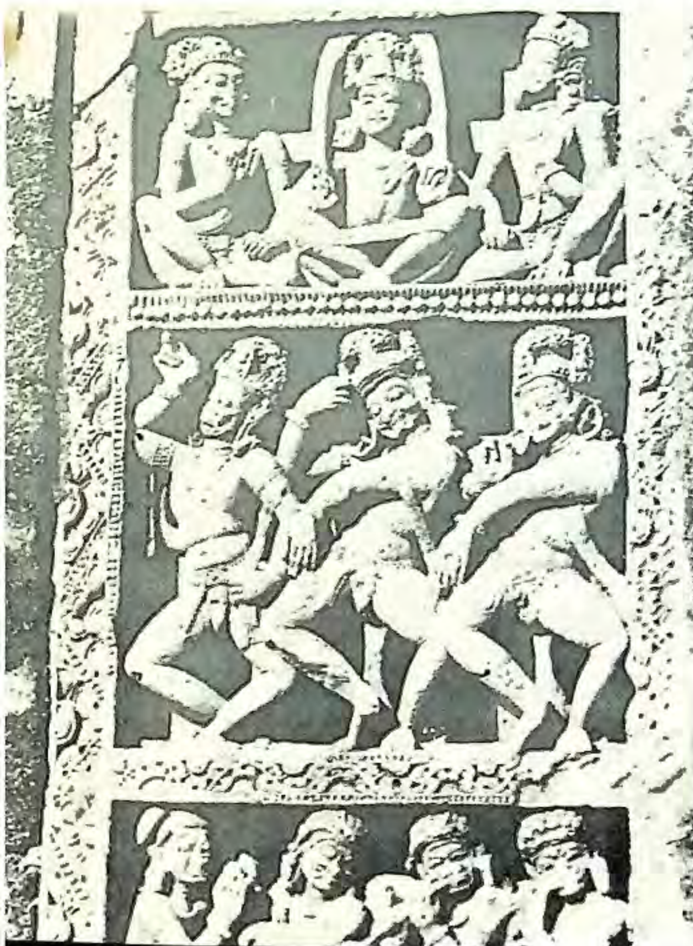
Below. Early decorative grille windows.

carving of naga figure protects the temple and adds to its auspiciousness.[23]

Naga pillars were not part of the decoration of the earlier Orissan temples. The concept of nagas, however, was not unfamiliar, though not of common occurrence in the decorative scheme of these temples. On the shrine doorway of the Sisiresvar temple is a fully human figure with a naga hood, and a side niche on the *mukhasala* wall is occupied by a seated male figure with a naga hood. On the adjoining Vaital temple, a male figure carved on the interior wall of the shrine is shown seated cross-legged on a lotus seat with a seven-headed naga hood behind him. Other examples of such figures with naga hoods come from the Singanath temple and from the Ratnagiri monastery. At Mukhalingam the spouts allowing rain water to drain from the roof are treated as naga figures with hoods, one such figure being carved also on the right side of the shrine at ground level where water from the ablutions to the linga within, emerges from the *kumbha* held in the hands of the naga. In general, however, examples of nagas in the earlier temples are scarce—apparently they became important in the decorative scheme at a later date. The idea that they afford protection to a temple also seems to have arisen later.

WINDOWS

The *mukhasalas* of the early Orissan temples had windows with a grille design of one type or another and it appears that the architectural texts allowed wide latitude in their treatment. In the earlier temples the grilles were often





elaborated into a figure composition. The Parasuramesvar *mukhasala* has two simple grille windows, as well as two superimposed with animated figures of dancers and musicians. These images are carved in two levels against the background of a square grille that is not visible except under close examination. Another similar window is fashioned in three tiers as dancers and musicians, and is today fixed into the compound wall of the Kapilesvar temple. A unique window carved as a dancing Siva against the background of a square grille is now lying in a miniature shrine near the Muktesvar temple. These two grilles must have belonged to earlier temples.

There are several other varieties of grilles among the early temples and at Singanath the window is cut in the form of square blocks, with each solid block carved with a *purnaghata*, and a squatting or standing dwarf. The horizontal bands between are decorated with *chaitya* arches. The Isvara temple at Paikapada has a window in the form of a wheel, and the window of the adjoining Patalesvar is carved as intersecting circles. At Mukhalingam there are three narrow grille openings—one treated as three circles, the second as a *svastika* and the third as squares. The Sisiresvar is the only temple without windows, its place on the *mukhasala* being occupied by a large sculptured niche.

The standardization of window types begins to appear first on the temples at Gandharadi, Chaurasi, and on the Muktesvar at Bhubanesvar, where we see windows with grilles in diamond shape. At Chaurasi and Muktesvar the windows have three floral and scroll bands surrounding them, the Muktesvar having, in addition, an attractive band of frolicking monkeys. In all three examples there are little blocks in the centre of each window jamb, with a Lakshmi at the top, a male figure below and flying *gandharva* couples on the two sides. The *Silpa Prakasa* informs us that the ideal grille window should consist of five upright bars with the figure of an indolent maiden carved against each.[24] This type of window is not to be seen in any of our early *mukhasalas*, but is the standard one for all the later Orissan temples. One wonders if perhaps such passages could be later interpolations.



Door jamb of Svarnajalesvar temple at Bhubanesvar.

DOORWAYS

The decorative treatment of the doorways leading into the *mukhasala* of the early Orissan temples admits of a fair degree of variation. Generally we find a four-armed *dvarapala* carved at the lower end of the doorway and reaching, in height, to roughly a quarter of the entrance. Three or four bands of decorative carving along the jambs include scrollwork, rope bands, gourd bands, the *gelbai* motif, lotus petal bands, and occasionally panels of *mithunas*. On some temples little naga figures and the river goddesses Ganga and Yamuna stand beyond the *dvarapalas*. The lintel image varies and while the most common figure is that of *gajalakshmi*, we find other images including the seated Ganesa.

The *Silpa Prakasa* lays down that *dvarapalas* should be placed on either side of the doorway and it describes the two varieties of Lakshmi images to be carved on the lintel.[25] It details a variety of doorway decoration in which the innermost jamb is to be treated as entwined nagas, a type we find



only in the temples at Baidyanath and Charda in interior Orissa. The text suggests that two steps in half-moon shape should be placed in front of the entrance. A single semi-circular step may be discerned at Mukhalingam, and may be seen clearly also on the Muktesvar temple at Bhubanesvar. It is likely that the lowering of the ground level around other *mukhasalas* will reveal a similar step.

DECORATIVE MOTIFS

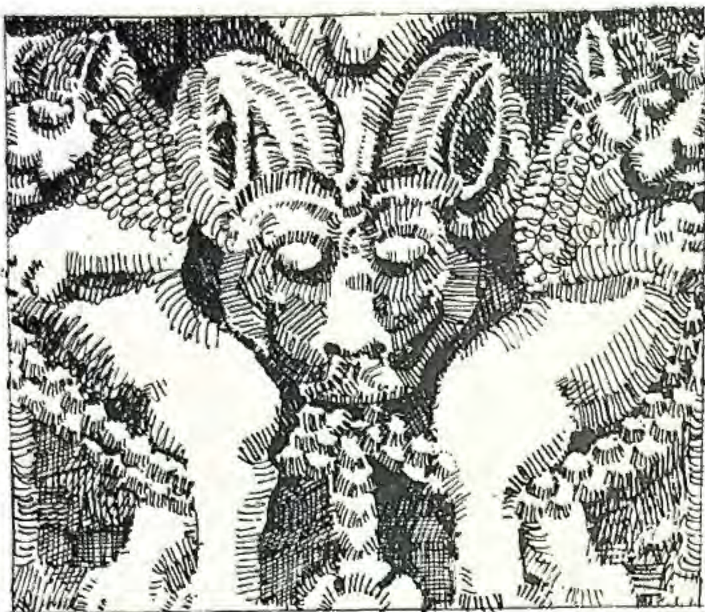
Decorative Dots. Dots, and decoration based on the dot were extremely popular in the earlier temples. Each *vajramastaka* was outlined with dots, and each small arch too was similarly ornamented. Every motif on a pilaster was separated from the one above and below by a row of dots, and doorways had vertical bands of dots. This profusion of dots is to be seen on the Parasuramesvar, the Satrughnesvar group, the Svarnajalesvar, on the Markandesvar, Sisiresvar and Vaital temples, at Singanath, Kualo, Suklesvar, and at Ratnagiri. While dots are to be seen also at Chaurasi, they are by no means prominent in the decorative scheme. Dotted bands are to be seen occasionally in the later temples as on the Gauri and Tirthesvar temples, or at Baudh, but they are not the large rounded dots of the earlier temples. In the later examples, the *vajramastaka* with the dotted outline that was so popular earlier is no longer apparent.

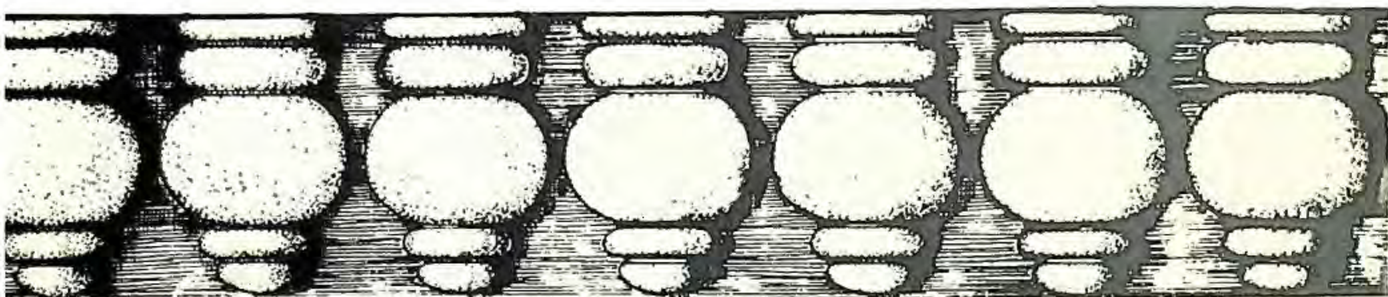
Jharavali or Rows of Pendants. In the early temples rows of beautiful pendants, large and rounded in shape and known as *jharavali*, are carved with great care and precision. This decorative feature appears to go hand in hand with the dotted arch. When the pendant is occasionally seen in later temples, as at Chaurasi, Gauri and on the Muktesvar, it is not prominent.

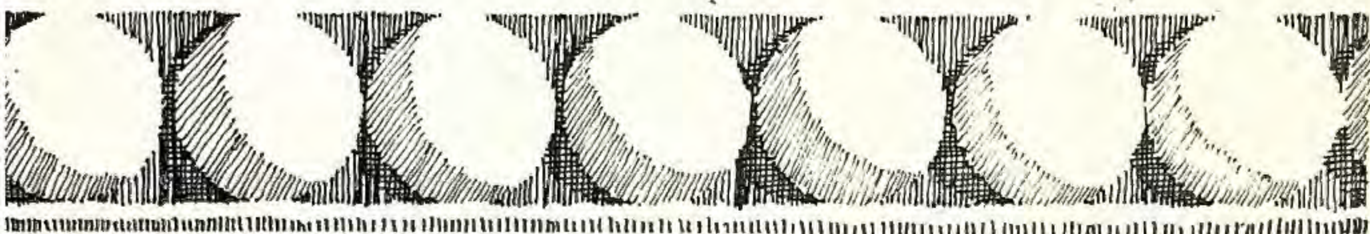
Trellis-work (jali) Panels. Panels of shallow trellis-work are popular in the earlier temples, together with the dotted arch and *jharavali*. *Jali* panels are to be seen alternating with vases, pilasters, couples and occasionally with *bharavahakas*. This motif is to be seen on the Parasuramesvar, Satrughnesvar, Svarnajalesvar, on the Markandesvar, Sisiresvar and Vaital and at Mukhalingam, Singanath and Suklesvar. It is also to be seen on the Chaurasi *mukhasala* and in small strips on the Gauri temple.

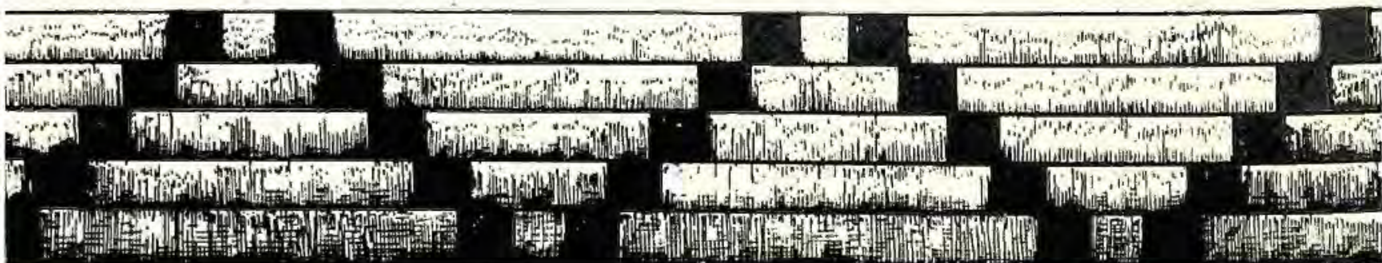
Stepped Merlons. This motif, found only on the earliest temples, soon disappears from the decorative scheme. We see it on the Parasuramesvar, the Satrughnesvar group, the Svarnajalesvar, on the Vaital, Markandesvar and Sisiresvar temples, and at Mukhalingam and Singanath.

Purnaghata. A large *ghata* or vase overflowing with foliage, probably a symbol of fertility and fecundity, is used to decorate the base and the top of pillars and pilasters, and is prominent in the earlier temples. The broad shallow pilasters that flank the various figures on the *mukhasala* of the Parasuramesvar are embellished with *purnaghatas*, which occur in similar position on the shrine wall also where such pilasters flank the side niches. The motif is prominent on the Svarnajalesvar, the Satrughnesvar group, in the Markandesvar/Vaital group, at Singanath, Kualo, Bajrakot, Mukhalingam and Ratnagiri. It occurs also on the new Bhavani-Shankar temple at Bhubanesvar, at Borogram, Suklesvar, and on the Amangai temple. At Chau-









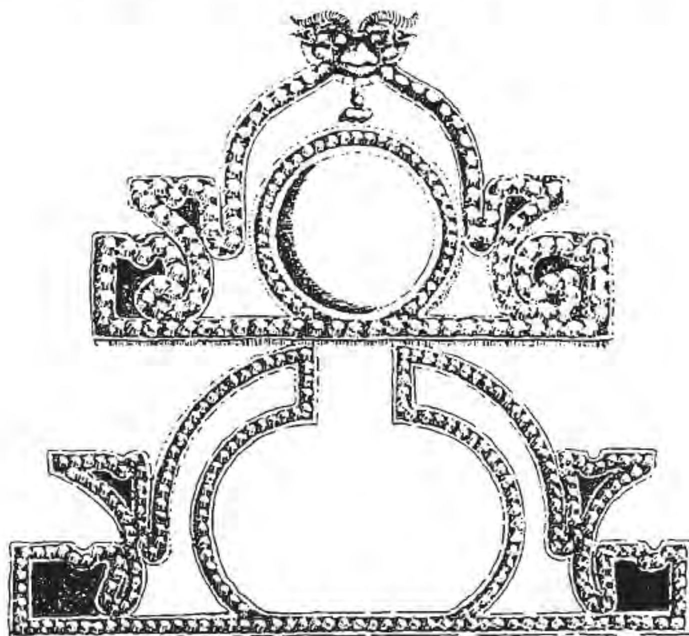
Left, below, and overleaf. Typical decorative motifs.

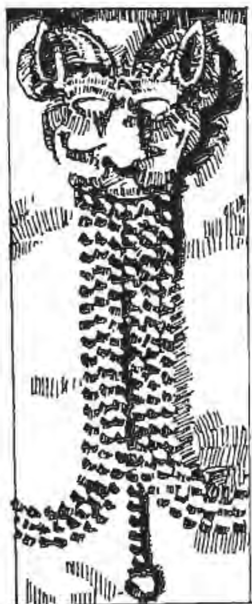
rasi where the *purnaghata* does not occur on the pillars and pilasters, *kumbhas* (vases) alternating with *mithunas* are used to decorate the level between the two flat roofs of the *mukhasala*. The *purnaghata* motif disappears altogether in the Gauri, Tirthesvar and Muktesvar temples, and is absent at Khiching too.

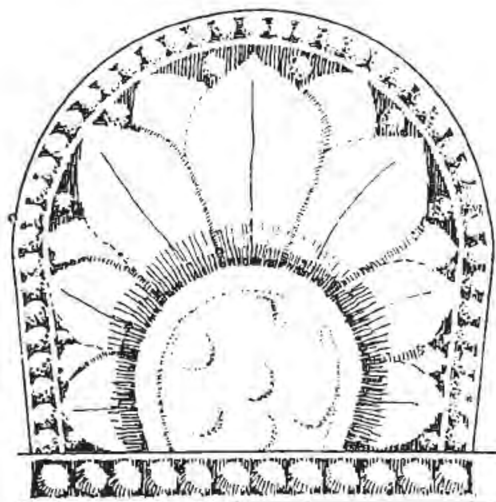
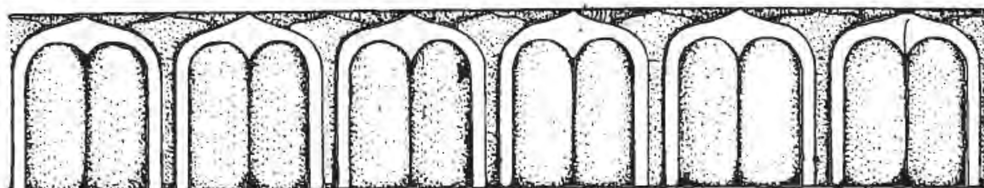
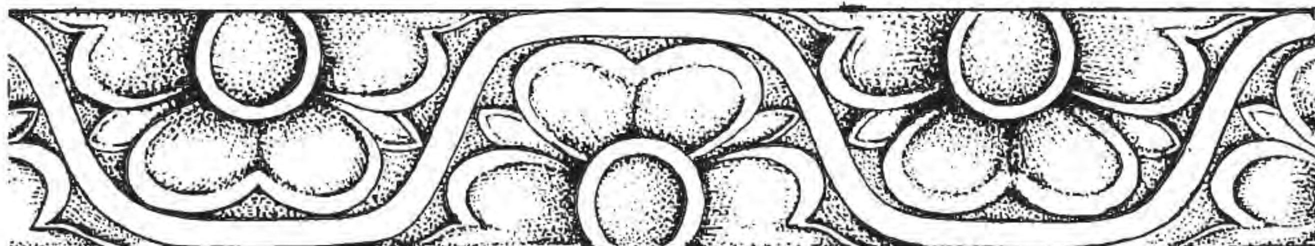
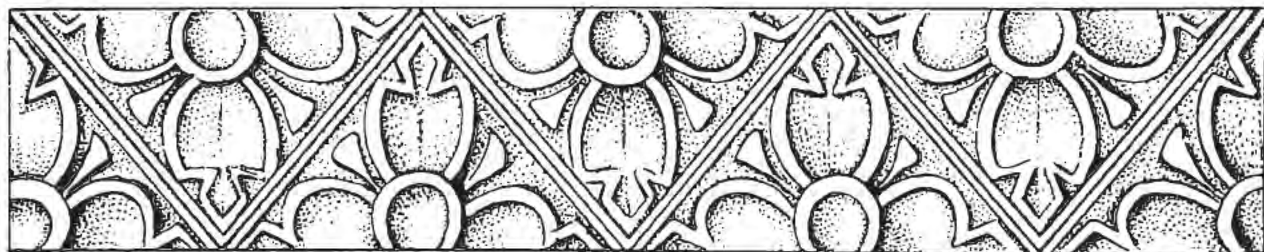
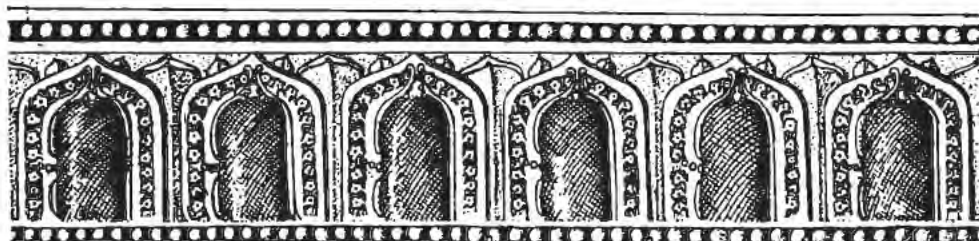
Kirtimukha. Seen in all our Orissan temples is the *kirtimukha* or Face of Glory, representing the head of a lion-like creature, with four strands of pearls issuing from the mouth, these being held up on either side by a rearing lion. In the earlier temples it is the head that is prominently depicted, as evident on the doorway of the Parasuramesvar temple. A similar type of *kirtimukha* occurs at the top of the *vajramastakas* that decorate the *rahas* of all the earlier temples. The *kirtimukha* also appears thus at the top of the *bho* arch on the Gauri and Muktesvar temples.

In the later temples of our group the *kirtimukha* is seen as part of the standard decoration of the pilasters on the walls of the temple. Such pilasters, as we have seen, are embellished with a *kanya*, a scroll, a *kirtimukha* garland and a *bhara vahaka*. Emphasis has shifted from the *mukha* to the garland, the lion-head having become much smaller and the garlands suspended from the mouth much longer. In this form it is seen at Gandharadi, on the Gauri, Tirthesvar and Muktesvar temples at Bhubanesvar, at Baudh, and on the stone cells of the Ratnagiri monastery.

Bharavahaka. The word *bharavahaka*, literally translated, means weight-bearers, and we are following the *Silpa Prakasa* in using it as a general term to describe various types of *yaksha*-like figures that seem to uphold sections of a temple. These pot-bellied, dwarf-like figures usually have their hands above their shoulders as if bearing a weight. *Bharavahakas* are seen only occasionally in the earlier temples, and seem to gather popularity later at





the Chaurasi, Baudh, Tirthesvar and Muktesvar temples. The *Silpa Prakasa* tells us that these figures should be seated in *kukkutasana*, like a cock, or in other words, in a squatting position. The text suggests that they should be depicted preferably in pairs.[26] In the later temples of our group, single *bharavahakas* appear at the top of the pilasters that comprise the *konaka* and *anuraha* sections of the temple walls. A unique occurrence of the motif is in the Gauri temple where the entire base of the temple is supported by rows of *bharavahakas*.

Floral Motifs. Bands of lotus petals and bands of rosettes are popular decorative motifs to be found throughout our early Orissan temples. Petal bands are to be seen both in vertical and horizontal alignments, and rosette bands are most commonly found as borders to the various levels of the temple wall and *sikhara*. In the later temples these motifs have to compete for attention with the many bands of scrolls, while in the earlier temples they hold undisputed sway. Bands decorated to represent an undulating or triangular figuration of the lotus and its stem occur only in the temples of the earlier phase, and are totally absent in the Gauri, Tirthesvar and Muktesvar temples. The same may be said of gourd bands and rope bands, as also of that most popular motif, the half-lotus. This latter is seen in various shapes, sizes and styles in the earlier temples.

Scrolls. Decoration based on the leafy scroll is to be seen in our entire series of temples. The prime position of the scroll is to decorate pillars and pilasters, but in the later temples it is also seen in narrow bands, decorating the various levels of the *sikhara*. The *gelbai* scroll, a motif typical of Orissa, occurs in all the temples from the earliest to the very latest. It depicts an undulating stem, within the curves of which are placed tiny figures, usually male, occasionally female, climbing up this rising stem.

Lions. Addorsed lions, a comparatively rare feature in Orissa, are to be seen only on four temples—the Parasuramesvar, the Vaital, Sisiresvar and Markandesvar, where they decorate the *sikhara* of the shrine. Lions crouching on elephants, a motif that is seen in a few of our early Orissan temples, become fashionable with architects during the late phase of Orissan temple building, which, however, is beyond the scope of this book. The motif appears on the Parasuramesvar *sikhara* where it is seen at the corners of the recessed *bandhana*, and on the Svarnajalesvar and Vaital shrines. In the later temples of our series—at Chaurasi, Gandharadi, Tirthesvar and Muktesvar —the lions are seen in pairs crouching upon elephants at the base of naga pillars and pilasters.

4

Sculptural Programme

During the Gupta period, immediately prior to the phase of our earliest Orissan temples, the art of sculpture had been developed to a fine degree. The workshops at Mathura and Sarnath produced magnificent images in a naturalistic style, and in the words of Coomaraswamy, "... technique is perfected and used as a language without conscious effort".[1] A series of temples with sculptural decoration such as those at Bhumara, Nachna Kuthra, and Deogarh were built in the late Gupta period. The human body was portrayed in deep relief as tall and slender; figures were rarely shown in stiff and rigid postures, but almost always with a marked *dehancement*. At Deogarh for instance, the row of figures standing below the throne of the majestic reclining Vishnu have slender bodies portrayed in a *tribhanga* pose, and well-modelled arms and legs which show a considerable understanding of anatomy on the sculptor's part.

In view of the apparent though indirect contacts with the Guptas seen in the fact that certain early Orissan inscriptions are dated in the Gupta era,[2] it is rather strange that when we turn to consider the sculptural style of our earliest Orissan temples, there is little evidence to show either a continuation of Gupta sculptural style or its influence on the Orissan idiom. While the gods are portrayed in our early temples in a vigorous and vivid manner that brings out their inherent power and dynamism, we find a very shallow carving in which proportions are poor, images stocky and figures generally in rigid postures. The human body has an awkward appearance with arms and legs seeming to be separate entities, flat and flabby, and attached to the body in an inorganic fashion without any depiction of underlying bone or muscular structure. This inept treatment of the limbs extends to fingers and toes which are shown grossly enlarged. Seated figures are even more uncomfortably placed and this is seen quite clearly, for instance, in panels such as the seated Siva and Parvati from the Parasuramesvar temple (see page 182). There is a clumsy depiction of the bent legs and an equally inelegant placing of Parvati's elbow on Siva's shoulder. The large, important images in the *parsva-devata* niches are in general somewhat deeper cut and better polished and, as we shall see, it is probable that these were the work of more advanced craftsmen. Here too, however, as in the instance of the Kartikeya image on the Parasuramesvar temple (facing page) there is the same inadequate treatment of arms and legs and the same ponderous



The god Kartikeya from the *parsva-devata* niche of the Parasuramesvar temple at Bhubanesvar.

depiction of the toes. We find also a rather characteristic representation of the eyes as rounded and protruding and totally devoid of expression. This style of carving is seen in a whole series of temples including the Parasuramesvar, the Satrughnesvar group, the Svarnajalesvar, the *astaparivara* temple at Mukhalingam, and the *panchayatana* temple at Kualo.

A distinct change in sculptural style is seen however on another group of temples, in which the carvings have more depth and the figures are better proportioned. Arms and legs, fingers and toes are more adequately carved, and figures both male and female display a distinct though not exaggerated *dehancement*. Bodies are more slender and there is an attempt, which was earlier absent, to delineate the muscular structure of the abdomen. At the same time, the somewhat awkward positioning of the legs of the seated figures persists. On the Vaital temple which displays this stylistic change in carving, images are placed within slightly deeper niches. Limbs are better treated and more organically joined so that one no longer has the feeling that they are separate entities awkwardly hooked on to the body. While the treatment of legs is still occasionally clumsy, the art of dealing with arms and shoulders seems to have been mastered. For instance the *darpana* on page 64 applying a *tika* to her forehead is most gracefully poised with her arm naturalistically placed above and around her head. This style of carving is found on a series of temples including the Vaital, Markandesvar, the Sisiresvar at Bhu-

banesvar, and the Singanath temple on an island in the Mahanadi. Regrettably the latter temple has been extensively plastered so that the outlines of the majority of the figures are camouflaged.

As we come to the latest temples of our group we find a distinct advance in the sculptor's craft and we see a series of realistically portrayed *kanyas* in free relaxed positions, displaying a soft and sensuous modelling. The *darpana* reveals a masterly treatment of legs and bent foot, and the fingers adjusting hairdos are most gracefully carved. The figures are portrayed with a distinct *dehancement*—an elegant tilt of the head, hips swaying gently in the opposite direction, and legs at the same angle as the head. Details are vastly simplified with emphasis on the graceful flowing outlines of the body with its gently sloping shoulders, and on the face which is no longer broad and flat as it was earlier, but delicately portrayed with pointed chin, sharp nose, elongated eyes glancing downwards, and lips shaped into a gentle smile.

Equally well-handled is the standing *mithuna* couple in the creeper-climbing pose seen on page 136 which displays an understanding of the flexibility of the human form, both male and female. The girl has one leg raised high and placed in the man's palm and both her arms are around his neck. The man uses his other hand to support the girl's head as he bends forward to kiss her. The pose is most naturalistically portrayed and a comparison with early *mithunas* such as the one on page 22 shows how far the sculptor's art has progressed. Temples displaying this advance in sculptural treatment include the Baidyanath, the Varahi temple at Chaurasi, the Muktesvar at Bhuvanesvar, and the monuments at Khiching.

Darpana from Baidyanath.



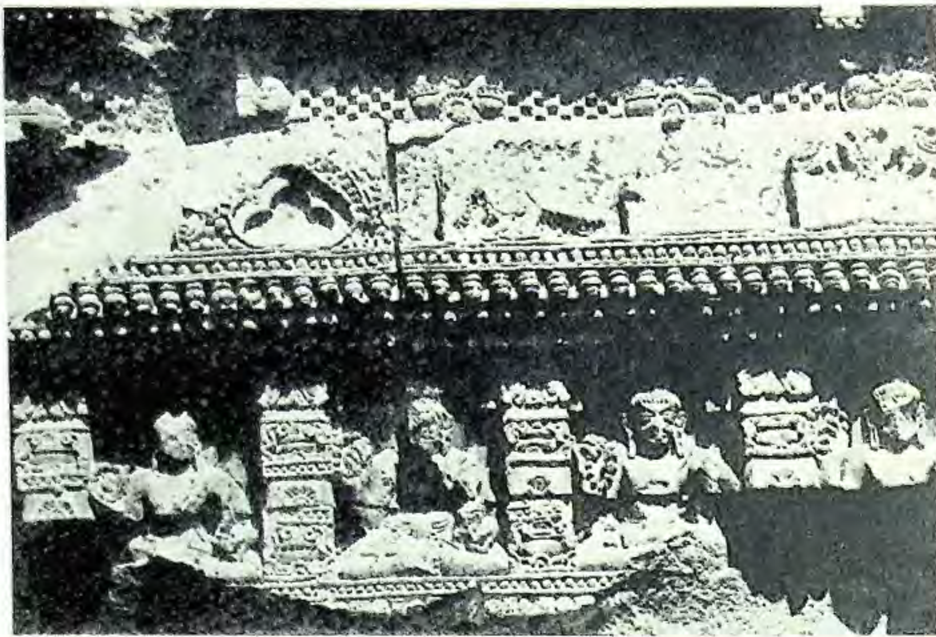
The Khiching temples contain some true masterpieces of sculpture prominent among which is a magnificent, large (over six feet high) image of a seated Siva and Parvati (page 186) that reveals the sculptor's mastery over his craft. Parvati has a happy smile on her face and Siva has a quiet contented expression as he raises her chin with one hand and caresses her breast with the other. Technically the carving displays complete competence. One of the *parsva-devata* niches of the Khichakesvari temple contains an image of a dancing Ganesa, a vigorous and truly joyous piece of carving that communicates to the viewer the happy movement of Ganesa's dance. Another *parsva-devata* niche carries a dynamic image of Devi fighting the buffalo-demon (facing page). Mahishamardini, who is carved so as to be practically free-standing dominates the scene with the decapitated buffalo below her feet and the demon who emerges from it barely reaching up to her knees. The image is imbued with great strength and vigour and exudes an aura of vitality. The features of the goddess are delicately carved and the entire sculpture is infused with movement. It is instructive to compare with it earlier images depicting the same theme, as for example the Devi on the Vaital temple. The Vaital goddess is part of a relatively flat relief sculpture in which she and the buffalo-demon are carved of almost equal size. Placing a raised leg on the shoulder of the demon, the Devi thrusts back the buffalo head with one hand. While gracefully carved, she could almost be described as static when compared to the radiant, forceful goddess of Khiching.

It would appear then, that while Gupta political influence extended in

some indirect manner into Orissa, and that while stone and brick temples were constructed by the Guptas in areas bordering Orissa, one feature the early Orissans did not imbibe from Gupta workshops was sculptural style. This is strange in view of the fact that certain sculptural themes appear to indicate knowledge of the Gupta experience, and the very existence of the Orissan temples themselves must be based on the knowledge of Gupta examples. Nevertheless, consideration of the sculptural style of the earliest Orissan temples seems to indicate that the early Orissan sculptors were ignorant of the perfected art forms of the adjoining areas. In the centuries preceding our earliest temples, there is little evidence of stone sculpture in Orissa. Perhaps a dozen or so pieces of stone carving may be assigned to the period between the carvings of the Chedi dynasty in the sandstone caves in the Udayagiri and Khandagiri hills (*c.* 50-1 BC) and our earliest temples around 600. It is almost as if the art of stone-craft was lost in these intervening centuries. However, once the Orissan sculptors made a start, they rapidly achieved a fluency in handling their material, made striking advances in style and technique, and rediscovered perfection in their own way. Sculpted above the doorway leading into the shrine of most of the Orissan

Durga killing the buffalo demon (*left*) from Paschimesvar temple at Bhubanesvar and (*right*) from Khiching.







Part of an *astagraha* lintel (*top*) from Svarnajalesvar temple at Bhubanesvar, and (*bottom*) from Bharatesvar temple at Bhubanesvar.

THE GRAHA LINTEL

temples is a row of *grahas* or planets, and while we find eight *grahas* in the earlier temples, the later ones depict a set of nine. According to the Hindu system of astronomy and astrology, the nine *grahas* are Surya (sun), Chandra (moon), Mangala (Mars), Budha (Mercury), Brihaspati (Jupiter), Sukra (Venus), Sanischara (Saturn), and the ascending and descending nodes of the moon known as Rahu and Ketu. It is not known why the early temples depict only eight of the *grahas*, commencing with Surya and ending with Rahu, since the theory of the nine *grahas* was known at a date prior to our earliest temples. Varahamihira's *Brhatsamhita*, a work of the sixth century, clearly describes the nine *grahas*. It appears that there were two systems, and that the system of the eight planets' was followed by the Jains, for example, up to a very late date. Certainly the Jains knew of the nine-planet system, but they apparently preferred to follow the *astottari* system in which Ketu was omitted. The Orissan Hindu *silpins* started out with the eight planet system, and at a slightly later date changed over to a system of nine *grahas*. It is strange that the author of the *Silpa Prakasa* should remain so completely silent on the subject of these *graha* images.

On the earlier temples, as on the Parasuramesvar shrine lintel, we see ima-

Below. Parvati from Vaital temple at Bhubanesvar.

ges of eight seated *grahas* with haloes behind their heads, and separated from one another by squat pilasters usually decorated with half-lotuses. Surya holds a full-blown lotus in each hand, Chandra has a crescent moon behind his head, Mangala has his hair in the *sikhandaka* fashion, and Sani has a clean-shaven crown. All the *grahas* (except Surya and Rahu) hold an *akshamala* (rosary) in one hand and a *kalasa* (water-vase) in the other. The exception to the general scheme is Rahu who is depicted as just a large head with one arm resting on the base of the panel. On the Parasuramesvar lintel inscribed labels are discernible above the figures, almost as if the idea of *grahas* was a new one and that it was hence necessary to identify them. However, the labels are carved in small letters and placed so high up above the doorway in a dark portion, that one cannot easily read them. The names are given as Adyatya (wrongly for Aditya, or Surya), Soma (or Chandra), Angirasa (Mangala), Budha, Brihaspati, Sukra, Sanischara, and Rahu.

An *astagraha* lintel from one of the temples of the Satrughnesvar group, also with identifying labels, is now in the Orissa State Museum. Similar *astagraha* lintels, but without the inscribed names, are to be seen in the Svarnajalesvar, the ruined Talesvar shrine and the Markandesvar temple, all at Bhubanesvar. Curiously enough the Sisiresvar and Vaital temples in the same town show no signs of ever having had a *graha* lintel. At Bajrakot and on the Singanath temple the *astagraha* lintel appears over the shrine doorway, but on the *panchayatana* temple at Kualo and on the *astaparivara* temple at Mukhalingam, it appears not over the doorway of the main shrine, but over that of one of the four corner shrines. The first temples with a distinct *navagraha* lintel are the Tirthesvar, Gauri, and Muktesvar temples, all at Bhubanesvar.

PARSVA-DEVATAS



We have seen in the previous chapter that each of the three outer walls of the shrine has a large niche in the middle housing a *parsva-devata*, an image subsidiary to the main deity to whom the temple is dedicated, yet closely related to that deity. In a Siva temple these niches house images of Siva's consort Parvati, and of their two sons Ganesa and Kartikeya. In Vishnu shrines we normally find figures of three incarnations of Vishnu, and in Devi temples we see three forms of the goddess. The general practice with regard to the carving of these important images seems to have been to have them sculpted separately out of independent large slabs of stone, perhaps by master craftsmen who prepared them at leisure in their own workshop. When completed, these images were brought to the site and inserted into the niches kept ready for them. Evidence of this practice is seen quite clearly in the case of the Parasuramesvar temple, and it appears that the same was the case with the side niches on that temple, every one of which is today empty. It would have been a simple matter to remove an image carved from a separate slab of stone, but next to impossible to do so with one carved out of the blocks that form part of the temple wall.

In the Svarnajalesvar, Sisiresvar, and Markandesvar temples at Bhuba-



Ganesa in the *parsva-devata* niche of Sisiresvar temple at Bhubanesvar.

nesvar, as also on the Singanath temple and at Chaurasi, the *parsva-devata* images were carved from separate slabs of stone. The *Silpa Prakasa* certainly indicates that this was the accepted practice. In referring to the *parsva-devatas* of a Siva temple, the author tells us that the architect should *place* the image of Ganesa on the south side, and that on the back wall of the temple, Kartikeya should be *set into* the wall.[3] The complete absence of all niche figures in later temples such as the Tirthesvar and Muktesvar must surely imply that these images were carved from independent slabs of stone and were hence easily pirated from their niches.

We find, however, that in certain temples the *parsva-devatas* have been carved *in situ* after the temple has been constructed, and that each image reveals the joints of the various blocks of stone of which the temple wall is comprised. This is the case in the Mohini and Vaital temples, both at Bhubanesvar, and also at Bajrakot, Suklesvar, and Kualo. We would conclude that at an early date the architectural texts had not laid down any specific ruling on the subject and that both practices were in vogue. By the time

of the *Silpa Prakasa* text, however, it had become the accepted practice to carve these important images from separate slabs of stone.

An iconographic progression in these important images is evident within the period of our early temples. As Panigrahi points out,[4] earlier images of Ganesa are without his mouse while in later examples the mouse is present. Similarly, in the case of Kartikeya, earlier images depict the god with just his peacock, while later examples include the cock. In the case of Parvati, Panigrahi suggests (and in our opinion this differentiation is not too important) that earlier images show the goddess holding a *ketaka* flower while later examples depict her with a lotus. There is also a definite distinction in Mahishamardini images based on the manner of depiction of the buffalo-demon. In earlier examples the demon is shown with a human body topped with a buffalo head, while in later examples he is shown in fully animal form, and a human demon emerges from the decapitated head of the creature.

ALASA KANYAS

Torana-kanya from Vaital temple at Bhubanesvar.



Beautiful young girls, placed in positions of lesser or greater prominence, decorate the walls of all Orissan temples. The text of the *Silpa Prakasa* is emphatic about the necessity of decorating a temple with figures of maidens, and its author tells us that the *naribandha* (panel of maidens) is indispensable to architecture. "As a house without a wife, as frolic without a woman, so without the figure of woman, the monument will be of inferior quality and bear no fruit."[5] As *alasa* (indolent maiden), she was to decorate all parts of a temple, and the author describes and illustrates sixteen types of such maidens: *alasa*, indolent; *torana*, leaning in a doorway; *mugdha*, innocent simple girl; *manini*, resentful, offended girl; *dalamalika*, drawing down towards her the branch of a tree; *padmagandha*, smelling a lotus; *darpana*, looking into a mirror; *vinyasa*, thoughtful and meditative; *ketakibandha*, wearing *ketaki* blossoms; *matrmurti*, mother with child; *gunthana*, bashful girl displaying her back; *chamara*, holding a fly-whisk; *nartaki*, dancer with hands joined together above her head; *sukasarika*, playing with a parrot or maina; *nupurapadika*, with one leg bent and pulling on ankle bells; *mardala*, drummer. "These are the sixteen maidens that dwell in a building made with art," says the author of the ancient text.

The *silpins* of the early Orissan temples certainly followed textual instructions about the desirability of decorating the walls of their temples with figures of *kanyas*, and on every single temple we see a range of these beautiful young girls. The two most popular seem to have been the *dalamalika*, a girl shown leaning against a tree and drawing one of its branches down towards her, and the *torana*, a maiden partly hidden by the door against which she is leaning. The trend in the representation of the *kanya* is towards giving her greater importance. In the earlier temples such as the Parasuramesvar, the girls are carved eight to ten inches high and they are placed entirely at random along the walls of the temple. In the latest of our monuments, the Muktesvar, the girls, some two to three feet in height, are deeply carved and form the adornment for the base of the series of decorative pilasters along the temple walls.





Kanyas from Vaital temple at Bhubanesvar, the two most frequently seen being the *dalamalika* (*upper left*) and the *darpana* (*lower right*).





MITHUNAS

The theme of the *mithuna* or loving couple played an important part throughout the history of the Orissan temples. The text of the *Silpa Prakasa* is categorical in stating the necessity of these images, and it tells us that a place without *mithuna* figures is a place to be shunned like the den of death. "Desire is the root of the Universe. From Desire all beings are born." It tells us that *mithuna* figures should always be carved on the *anarthas* of the shrine wall, and explains that the figures are placed there to give delight.[6]

Generally the *mithuna* figures carved on our group of early Orissan temples are not of a specifically erotic nature, but are rather couples with an arm along each other's shoulders. In this form *mithunas* are seen on every one of the early Orissan temples, and the images are rarely over twelve inches in height. They are placed casually along the temple walls, occasionally appearing as part of the doorway decoration, at other times along the recessed *bandhana* that divides the wall and *sikhara* of the shrine, and quite often forming part of the decoration of the *sikhara*. It is only during the period of the later mature Orissan temple which is beyond the scope of this book, that the *mithuna* images acquire greater importance, being then carved of much larger size and being placed in a specific position on the temple walls. However, even among the latest temples of our group, such a stage had not been reached.

While the majority of the *mithunas* in our early temples are not of a specifically erotic category, an occasional explicit sex scene may be found. Fragments from the early Satrughnesvar group of temples depict such erotic scenes that sometimes include an onlooker as well. On the walls of the Varahi shrine at Chaurasi are a series of eight erotic scenes which have been identified as depictions of the eight stages of ritual love-making detailed in the tantric text, the *Kaula Chudamani*[7]. One of these scenes depicts the Kapalika and Kaula monks participating in a sexual initiation ceremony (page 73), and it would appear that this particular Varahi temple was associated with sex rituals of the type practised by the Kaula sect. The Somavamsi rulers of Orissa, to judge from their copper plate charters, were followers of such a cult—all their records commence with several verses praising the pursuit of love.[8] It must, however, be reiterated that during the period of the early Orissan temple, the carving of explicit sexual scenes as opposed to *mithuna* couples is the exception rather than the general rule, whether it be on the earlier temples such as the Parasuramesvar or on later ones such as the Gauri and the Muktesvar.

RIVER GODDESSES

The river goddesses Ganga (the Ganges) standing on her *makara* and Yamuna (the Jumna) on her tortoise, appear flanking the doorway into the *mukhasala* or into the shrine in a whole series of early Orissan temples. This early occurrence of the river goddesses is as one might expect, since these deities had already appeared in such a position in the preceding Gupta period temples of adjoining areas. We see these goddesses on the Parasuramesvar, at Singanath, Kualo, and Bajrakot, at Suklesvar, Paikapada, Mukhalingam, and at the Ratnagiri monastery.



Mithuna from the Vaital temple at Bhubanesvar.





Above left. Fragment of an erotic scene from the Satrughnesvar group at Bhubanesvar. *Above right.* Initiatory Kaula ritual from the Varahi temple at Chaurasi.

As the Orissan temple developed, however, the river goddesses seem to have lost their popularity and they no longer form part of the sculptural scheme of the later temples. The silence in Orissan architectural texts on the subject of the river goddesses is perhaps to be attributed to the fact that most of these texts, including the important *Silpa Prakasa*, were composed at a time when the early Orissan temple was on its way to maturity—a time at which the importance of Ganga and Yamuna in the religious scheme was steadily diminishing.

SAPTAMATRIKAS

The worship of the Seven Mothers or the *saptamatrikas* seems to have been very popular in Orissa, and throughout the period of the early Orissan temples we find several representations of these goddesses. They appear on one of the earliest temples, the Parasuramesvar, where the goddesses are seen on the north wall of the *mukhasala*, flanked by Virabhadra and Ganesa. All are seated cross-legged, and below them are depicted their *vahanas* (vehicles) as also tripods of offerings. From left to right are Brahmi with her swan, Mahesvari with her bull, Kaumari with her peacock, Vaishnavi with *garuda*, Aindri with her elephant, Varahi with her buffalo, and Chamunda with her owl. All are shown with four arms, and Chamunda is a skeletal figure with sagging breasts. Similar representations of the *matrikas* appear around the *mukhasala* doorway of the Singanath temple, around the doorway of one of the barrel-vaulted shrines of the *astaparivara* Mukhalingam temple, and sculpted within the shrine of the Vaital temple.

The *astaparivara* Patalesvar temple at Paikapada has a separate shrine for the Saptamatrikas, and the main difference in the depiction is that now, with the exception of Chamunda, all the goddesses have a child seated on their knees. This feature is absent in the earlier temples, but apparently becomes the norm later on, and it is to be seen also in the latest of our temples, the Muktesvar at Bhuvanesvar. In the Muktesvar, the *saptamatrikas* are carved in a most unusual location—the ceiling of the *mukhasala*. A large eight-petalled lotus contains Virabhadra and the seven goddesses who, with the exception of Chamunda, hold a child on their knees. There is an inexplicable silence in the *Silpa Prakasa* on the subject of these goddesses but there is no

doubt that their worship was of great importance in Orissa throughout the ages, and indeed persists right into the present day.

HALOES

In the earliest temples haloes are carved frequently behind the head and shoulders of all the gods, as well as for certain apparently semi-divine beings. Haloes are circular or oval and often have a beaded or dotted outline. The Parasuramesvar, Satrughnesvar, Svarnajalesvar, Sisiresvar, Markandesvar and Vaital temples at Bhubanesvar, and the temples at Bajrakot, Kualo and Mukhalingam, provide ample evidence of the use of such haloes. All these temples have Saiva *dvarapalas* flanking the doorways and these doorkeepers too have haloes. The *dvarapalikas* on the Vaital temple and the *chauri*-bearers at Mukhalingam are also shown with this sign of their apparent semi-divine status. A rather intriguing feature is the occurrence of haloes on figures that appear to be of a non-divine category. On the Vaital temple a *kanya* holding a flower in one hand, and another *kanya* leaning against a door have haloes. It is not necessary to consider this an indication of semi-divine status since the halo also appears behind the head of males in more than one *mithuna* group. Such a use of haloes is quite inexplicable.

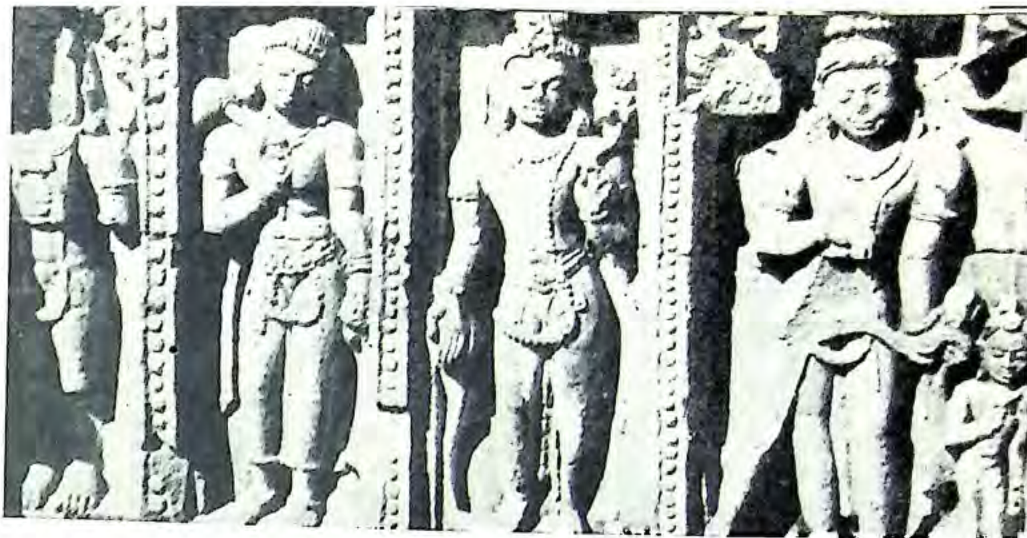








Details from a *saptamatrika* panel on the Singanath temple. *Above*. At left is Brahmi and at right, Mahesvari. *Below*. Varahi is at left and Chamunda at right.



Detail from doorway at the Ratnagiri monastery.

A consideration of the carvings on the later temples reveals that the use of haloes gradually diminishes. At Chaurasi, for example, haloes decorate only the *parsva-devata* images. With later temples such as the Gauri, Tirthesvar, and Muktesvar, all at Bhubanesvar, it is apparent that the carving of a halo to indicate divine status was no longer considered necessary. Certainly none of the gods on the Muktesvar ceiling (dancing Ganesa, Kartikeya or the Saptamatrikas) display haloes. In the period of the late mature temples, which is outside the span of this book, Orissan sculptors completely abandoned the practice of carving haloes for their gods.

SIVA WITH URDHVA LINGA

In the earliest Orissan temples the images of Siva in his variety of forms are invariably depicted with *urdhva linga* (erect phallus). The reason for this, one assumes, is that the erect phallus emphasized the power of the god who was normally worshipped in the form of a linga. Dancing Ardhanarisvar, seated Siva in Siva/Parvati panels, Nataraja, Ekapada, Harihara, Lakulisa, Virabhadra, Bhairava are all shown with a prominently carved upright linga. On later temples this practice seems to have been abandoned.

MEN'S HEAD-DRESSES

All the men sculpted on the walls of the early Orissan temples have elaborate hairstyles. There are a few examples of a wig head-dress 'curled as it were in horizontal parallel waves', and it has been pointed out that this type of wig appears towards the end of the sixth century and loses its popularity around 700.[9] The wig is certainly a Gupta survival and it is quite logical to find it in the earlier temples only. The style appears on some of the figures decorating the doorway of the Parasuramesvar temple, on a fragment from the Svarnajalesvar, and is seen also at the Ratnagiri monastery. Long vertical ringlets for a man's hairstyle are much more common and this hairdo is found frequently on the early temples. We see it on the Markandesvar, the Sisiresvar, the Vaital, the Mohini, the Singanath, Suklesvar, and at Kualo. It is seen on a naga from Chaurasi, at Bajrakot, on the Kartikeya image at Baidyanath, and on a naga from the Gauri temple. At Mukhalingam ringlets are to be seen on the majority of male figures both divine and secular, and the style is also seen at the Ratnagiri monastery.

5

Formative Phase

It would be of relevance to begin our discussion with a consideration of what exactly distinguishes a mere building from a piece of architecture like the early Orissan temple. As Nicholas Pevsner points out,[1] the term architecture applies only to those buildings with an aesthetic appeal, this appeal being produced in three ways. The painter's appeal, which is two-dimensional, is seen in the treatment of walls, windows, ornamentation, scrolls and bands of foliage designs—features that are specially important in the early temples. In fact, the two-dimensional painter's way is of great importance throughout India in all her temple architecture. The second mode of appeal, which is three-dimensional, is the sculptor's way: it considers the exterior of the temple as a whole, the proportion of its different parts, the contrast produced by the low flat roof of the hall against the gently soaring tower of the shrine, as also, for instance, the effect of recesses and projections introduced into a wall. Finally the architect's way, which is also three-dimensional, is concerned with space, the total impression of the treatment of the interior, with the sequence of the various rooms and halls. Thus, architecture is not concerned solely with space, and the good architect requires, in addition to his own spatial imagination, something of both the painter's and the sculptor's outlook.

The early Orissan temple which arose as a simple spatial concept in the architect's imagination, consisted of an enclosed shrine containing the sacred image of worship, with a room in front in which devotees could assemble. It appears that the Orissan architect laid the least emphasis on the treatment of interior space and on the embellishment of the interior, and the reason for this may lie in the specific nature of Hindu religious ritual. Except on special occasions like religious festivals, the Hindu religion does not favour congregational worship, each devotee visiting the temple at the time of day he chooses, making his individual offerings of fruit and flowers, and departing after sounding the temple bell. He rarely lingered in the temple hall—Hindu ritual did not require it of him. From the harsh bright sunlight of the Indian environment the worshipper entered the dim coolness of the hall with light filtering in through windows and the open doorway. And from this half-light he proceeded towards the shrine which contained within its mysterious depths the sacred image of worship—an image visible only by the flickering light of the numerous oil lamps. Hence it is perhaps that




Right. Detail from Mukhalingam. *Far right.* Unique carved grille window from the Parasuramesvar temple at Bhubanesvar.

the interiors of Orissan temples are undecorated, pillars simple, and with one exception, the ceilings are unembellished. This basic religious requirement for a temple interior, of an enclosed shrine and a simple hall, remained unaltered: having found a pattern that was good and acceptable, the Orissan architects saw no reason to change it.

Throughout the ages western architecture laid great emphasis on the aspect of space, and it is probably because of the relegation of space to a secondary position in India that a study of the temple plays so small a part in the history of world architecture.

From the beginning the Orissan architect concentrated on the painter's mode of appeal. His windows were cut into various types of decorated grilles —some in square and diamond shapes, others as wheels or *svastikas* and still others as elaborate figure compositions. He experimented with the decorative treatment of wall surfaces until he achieved what he found both satisfying and fulfilling—until the different masses complemented and balanced and counter-balanced one another. And of course with his great love for the purely decorative, he covered the exterior walls of the temple with figures of gods and goddesses, of *kanyas* and *mithuna* couples, with bands of intertwined scrolls and with a riot of floral and other ornamental motifs of increasing complexity and refinement.

At the same time the early Orissan architect also showed a remarkable understanding of the sculptor's point of view. His long, low, flat-roofed

temple hall is a foil to the tall tower that seems to reach up to the heavens. However, desiring to excel himself, he seems to have experimented with the roof of the hall until he finally found the solution in the form of a stepped pyramidal roof. His gradual addition of recesses and projections to the flat straight walls of the hall softened its stark lines and added dramatic interest.

In previous chapters we examined at length the development of architectural and sculptural features: an analysis of such a development enables us to propose a classification of the early Orissan temple into three relative groups. The first group, referred to as Formative, includes the largest number of temples, all of which have a flat-roofed rectangular hall (*mukhasala*) which in many temples is pillared. There is no uniform disposition of doors and windows, and the joint between the shrine and *mukhasala* is of a rudimentary type. The architects were apparently not yet in complete agreement regarding the decoration of the walls of the *mukhasala*, but in the treatment of the shrine walls as also of the *sikhara*, they worked according to a set formula. We have subdivided the temples of this Formative Phase into two groups which we believe to be arranged on a chronological basis. The main points of difference between these two sub-groups is the achievement of a more skilful joint between shrine and *mukhasala* in Group B temples, the introduction of a new and more ornate type of base moulding, and a distinct advance in sculptural style.

We shall be examining here the temples of the Formative Phase, while devoting the next two chapters to a consideration of two other major phases—the Transition and the Culmination. In the concluding chapter we shall try to correlate with this sequence the evidence available from inscriptions and palaeography, and look at the total picture against the background of contemporary religion and history. The latest temple in our group is the Muktesvar at Bhubanesvar. If we were to consider the history of all Orissan temples we would classify the Muktesvar as transitional and leading up to such 'giants' as the Lingaraj. For our present study, however, the Muktesvar is a definite landmark—the end of the development of the early temples and a forerunner to the later style of temples which always displayed two sculptural levels.

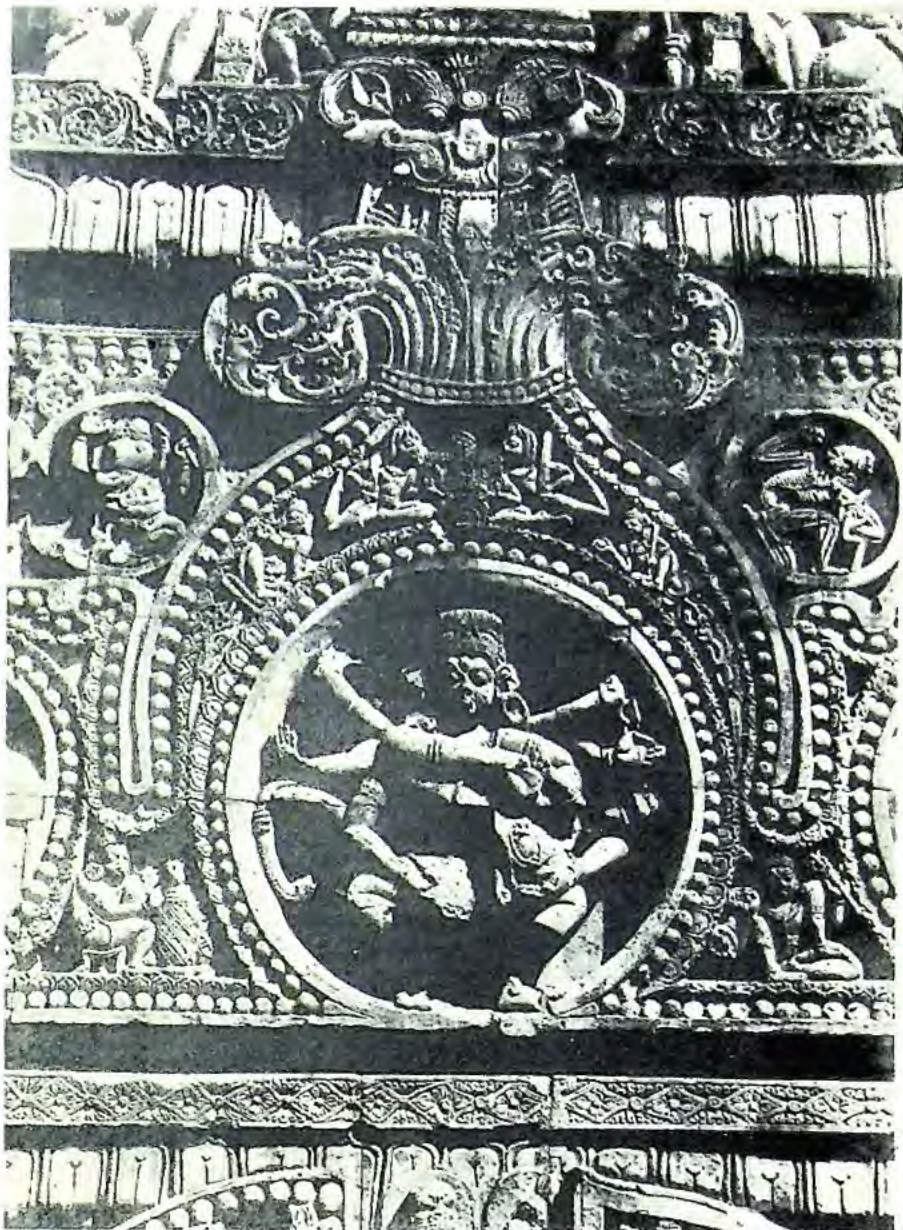
Side niche from Parasuramesvar temple at Bhubanesvar.



TEMPLES OF GROUP A

Group A of the Formative Phase includes fifteen monuments, most of them in the Bhubanesvar region but some belonging to areas as far-flung as Mukhalingam and Subei in the ancient region of Kalinga. The majority of these are temples of the standard early *rekha* type, but the group includes one tiny shrine of the *khakhara* variety, one *panchayatana* temple with four shrines at the four corners of the temple area, one *astaparivara* or eight-shrined temple, one Buddhist monastery, and one Jain site.

The typical temple of Group A has a shrine that corresponds exactly to the early *rekha* variety called the *rathayukta* which we have discussed earlier in some detail.[2] To recapitulate briefly, the temple (both shrine and *mukhasala*) has base mouldings of our Category I with a marked difference in the level of these mouldings, those of the *mukhasala* being lower. The shrine



Front *raha* oi
Parasuramesvar temple.

has *triratha* walls divided into a central *parsva-devata* niche and two side niches carved as barrel-vaulted shrines. These side niche shrines have below them three independent bands of base mouldings and the lowest of these is cut into little blocks most often carved as lions and elephants, but occasionally with a depiction of a *mithuna* or a dancing scene. This last band is characteristic of temples of the Formative Phase and does not appear later. The images in the *parsva-devata* and side niches were generally carved from separate slabs of stone and inserted into prepared niches, rather than being carved from the blocks of stone comprising the temple wall.

Dividing the *bada* (wall area) from the *sikhara* is a recessed *bandhana*, and the mouldings above and below it are decorated with *chaitya* arches and human figures, with an edging of dots and pendants. The *sikhara* above is *pancharatha*, with a central *raha*, two *konakas* (corner ribs) and two *anarthas* (intermediary ribs). The *raha* (central rib) is decorated with an elaborate

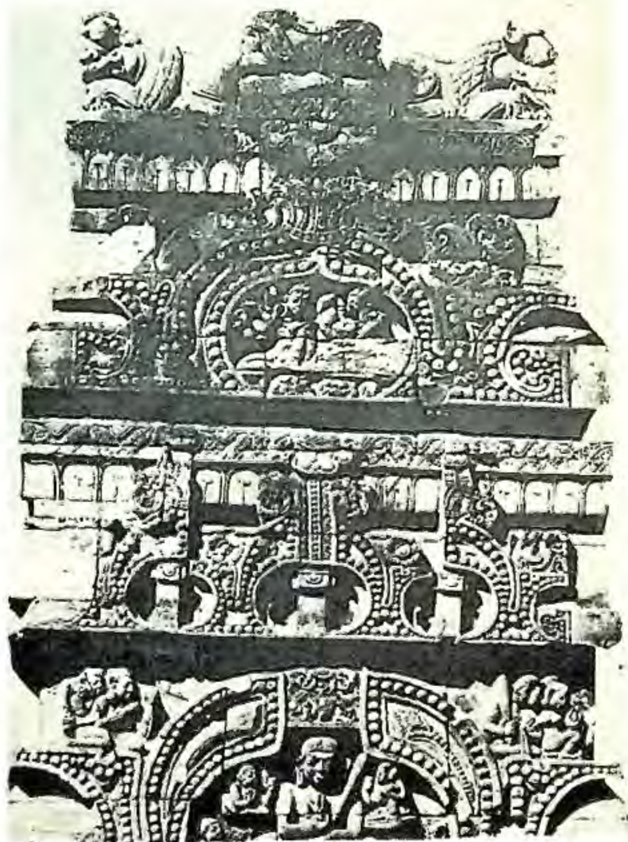
double arch known as a *vajramastaka*, and the *raha* above the shrine doorway, which is the broadest, contains the most important sculptural decoration. The *konakas* of the *sikhara* are divided into five horizontal units by *amalakis*, and each unit has three further horizontal levels of carving. At the top of the *sikhara* are lions placed at the four corners and in the centre is a large *amalaka* which in Siva temples is crowned with a trident, and in Vishnu temples with a *chakra*.

Group A temples display a very elementary jointing of shrine and *mukhasala*, with the latter built up directly against the shrine so that the front wall of the shrine serves also as the back wall of the *mukhasala*. An important feature in the decoration of the shrine doorway is the occurrence of an *astagraha* lintel. With the exception of Rahu who is depicted as just a head, each of the *grahas* is seated in *padmasana* holding an *akshamala* in one hand and a *kalasa* in the other and separated from one another by tiny decorated pilasters.

The *mukhasalas* of Group A and Group B temples have flat double roofs, with a clerestory between to let in both light and air. There is no uniformity in the decorative scheme of the walls nor in the placing or sculptural treatment of doors and grille windows. Interior pillars are very simple in construction and have plain square shafts culminating in a roll capital. Characteristic decorative features of Group A temples include pilasters decorated with *purnaghatas* and half lotuses, the dotted arch, shallow *jali* work, *jharavali*, bands of lotus petals, stepped merlons and rows of dots. Typical too is the detailed iconography that we find in all sculptural representations. A panel depicting Siva and Parvati always has the bull Nandi beside Siva, the lion beside Parvati, their two sons Ganesa and Kartikeya,

Details of bas-relief sculpture from the *sikhara* of the Parasuramesvar temple.







Kartikeya from the Bharatesvar temple.

and often that devout worshipper of Siva, the sage Bhringi. Haloes are very popular. The carving is shallow and the positioning of legs, thighs, arms and shoulders is noticeably clumsy. Limbs appear rather as separate entities, not organically joined to the body, and toes and fingers are particularly inexpertly carved. Figures are generally rigid and frontal and there is no indication of any underlying muscular structure. Yet the sculptors succeeded in portraying powerful and vibrant images of the various deities.

Parasuramesvar at Bhubanesvar. The Parasuramesvar temple at Bhubanesvar is the best-known of Group A temples and is one of the few examples of this group that today has both shrine and *mukhasala* intact. It is a Siva temple typical of Group A and displays all the features, architectural, sculptural and decorative, that we have already detailed. It is not large in size —none of our early Orissan temples is noteworthy on this account—and its *sikhara* reaches up to a height of 40 feet. The shrine tower presents us with a solid bulky structure that gives one the feeling of its being rooted down to earth, and yet it has an archaic elegance of its own. Shrine and *mukhasala* together comprise a well-proportioned group with the very gently curving tower providing an admirable contrast to the low straight-lined hall in front with its flat double roof with sloping edges.

The decorative scheme of the shrine is well-organised and it is quite apparent that it is the result of close adherence to architectural texts that laid out the pattern to be followed. The base mouldings, the clear-cut division of the wall into three segments, and the very precise decorative treatment of the shrine tower are all indicative of this. By contrast the relatively uncertain scheme of the *mukhasala* suggests a certain degree of experimentation, and it appears that as yet there was no formula for the exact placing of doorways and windows, for their manner of decoration, nor indeed for the sculptural treatment of the long walls of the *mukhasala*.

There is considerable disparity in the quality of carving between the walls of the *mukhasala* and that of the shrine. On page 82 is apparent the totally disorganised scheme on the *mukhasala* walls, that suggests that the sculptors were uncertain as to how to handle the available wall space and decided to fill it in at random with *chaitya* arches. Even the arrangement of the arches on the wall surface does not seem to have been planned in advance, and when space ran short, the arch was narrowed so that quite often the two sides of an arch do not correspond in size with each other. If we consider the central arch on page 82 we see that the space to the right of the arch has been carved with a *jali* pattern while the space to the left, which is half as narrow, has floral carving. It appears that this was one of the first attempts at carving rectangular walls of a *mukhasala*, and the craftsmen, in the absence of textual injunctions, were still experimenting with motifs to carve on these walls. There is, however, considerable charm in these flat, frontal carvings with their plain background and their unpolished effect.

Contrasting with this is the superior carving of the *parsva-devatas* on the shrine walls. Kartikeya is depicted with his hair in the *sikhandaka* or *kakapaksha* mode which is standard for this god in Orissa. He is seated in *lalitasana* with his peacock in front of him, pecking at a snake. The well-polished Kartikeya and Ganesa images are certainly accomplished pieces of work and

the general impression one gets is that the better craftsmen were deputed to work on the shrine walls, with the lesser artists being set to work on the *mukhasala*. It seems quite likely that the *parsva-devata* images were carved by master craftsmen and then brought to the site and inserted into the prepared niches.

The south wall of the *mukhasala* is better handled than the north, and the single doorway and window divide this south wall into three bays, each of three compartments with deities carved within them. The central compartment of two of these bays is made to project slightly, as if the architect was modelling himself on the *triratha* shrine with projecting *parsva-devata* niches which had presumably just been completed. On this better-organised south wall is a vibrant though damaged image of dancing Ardhanarisvar shown with eight arms and with *urdhvalinga* (erect phallus). To his left is the skeletal figure of sage Bhringi and to the right is a much damaged Ganesa. The adjoining niche is occupied by images of seated Siva and Parvati in which the carving and positioning of arms and legs is noticeably awkward. Siva is here too depicted with *urdhvalinga*. The iconography of the scene is complete with Nandi below Siva, the lion below Parvati, and Ganesa between the two mounts. Separating the various figures is a typical feature of the Formative Phase—a pilaster with *purnaghata* at top and bottom and an elongated half-lotus and floral motif between.

Disorganised carving on the *mukhasala* of the Parasuramesvar temple.






Figures on the Parasuramesvar *mukhasala:* Chamunda, (*left*) and Lakulisa (*right*).

On the opposite north wall we find eighteen deities in one flat row, separated by a central window. To the right of the window are the entire series of the Saptamatrikas or Seven Mothers, flanked by Virabhadra and Ganesa: the group have expressionless faces and comprise a monotonous row of images. The goddesses are all seated in *padmasana* and below each is her identifying vehicle and a tripod of offerings. Three-headed, four-armed Brahmi has a swan below her seat, and while the *vahanas* of Mahesvari, Kaumari and Vaisnavi are missing, the objects in their hands help to identify them. Aindri holds Indra's *vajra* in one hand, and has the elephant Airavata carved against her pedestal. Varahi holds lotus, fish, axe and bowl, and depicted below her seat is a squatting human figure, perhaps Garuda. Skeletal Chamunda, with sunken belly, drooping breasts and prominent tendons is also seated in *padmasana*, with an owl depicted against her pedestal, but with no signs of the corpse or severed human head that appears in later depictions of this goddess. To the left of the window are Surya, Chandra, Durga, Varuna, Harihara and Indra. Lakulisa too is carved, seated in *padmasana* on a lotus seat with his hands in the *vyakhyana mudra*, the gesture of preaching, and with his *lakuta* held firmly against his body. There is a halo round his head and his hair is shown in ringlets on either side of his elongated ears.

Two of the grille windows of the Parasuramesvar *mukhasala* are carved into an imaginative figure composition of dancers and musicians in two tiers, and they present us with a set of animated lively male figures frozen in various positions of movement. A similar window, today cemented into the compound wall of the late Kapilesvar temple at Bhubanesvar, is carved in three levels of dancers and musicians and portrays a group of male figures in spirited action. It is an indication of the one-time existence of other temples of Group A style at Bhubanesvar, and providing similar testimony is a grille carved into a forceful dynamic image of many-armed dancing Siva with Ganesa to one side and a seated drummer on the other, and now lying inside a miniature shrine in the compound of the Muktesvar temple at Bhubanesvar. This type of grille window is restricted to the Formative Phase and is in fact unique to Orissa.



Niche with Siva and Parvati from the recently uncovered new Bhavani-Shankar temple at Bhubanesvar.

The eight *grahas* carved on the lintel above the shrine doorway have their names inscribed above the figures. The reason for the identifying labels is not clear as these are carved high up beyond one's normal range of vision and in a completely dark portion. Their lack of ready visibility will be apparent from the fact that while the Parasuramesvar *graha* lintel has been known for years, the inscribed labels are a relatively recent discovery.

The *vajramastaka* on the front *raha* of the *sikhara* contains a spirited depiction of many-armed, many-headed Ravana attempting to shake mount Kailasa on which are seated Siva and Parvati. The iconography is complete with bull Nandi, Parvati's lion, Ganesa brandishing an axe, Kartikeya seated on his peacock with javelin in hand, and the emaciated figure of the sage Bhringi. The circular portion of the double arch contains an image of ten-armed dancing Siva and the arch terminates in a *kirtimukha* on which is a lotus seat with Lakulisa seated on it.

New Bhavani-Shankar Temple at Bhubanesvar. Discovered recently while digging a drain in the compound of the later Bhavani-Shankar temple is an early temple that may be assigned to the Formative Phase. It is situated in the area between the Lingaraj temple and the Bindu Sarovar tank, and its

complete disappearance underground is a startling reminder of the extent to which the ground level has risen in the intervening centuries. The Archaeological Survey intends to take up the uncovering of this temple but as this involves the dismantling of the comparatively new building above part of it, this is likely to take time. In the meantime, on the rather slender evidence of only part of one side wall of the structure, we would suggest that the temple belongs to Group A of the Formative Phase together with the Parasuramesvar.

This little temple, not of any great size, possesses a distinct archaic charm. One wall of the shrine is visible, displaying base mouldings of category I, and a division of the wall area into a central *parsva-devata* niche and two side niches. The treatment of the side niches is typical of Group A temples, and there is that characteristic band of little blocks carved into the foreparts of lions and elephants. The one *parsva-devata* niche that is visible contains an image of seated Siva and Parvati, an unusual feature unknown from other temples. Siva temples, as we have seen, normally contain images of Ganesa, Kartikeya, and Parvati in these niches. Siva is here depicted with four arms and is shown with *urdhva linga*. There is a halo behind Siva and the traces of one behind Parvati also, and the carving and positioning of their feet is noticeably awkward. The bull Nandi is portrayed, looking back upwards at Siva in a most disarming manner, and below Parvati is the head of her lion. The bands of carving around the niche include all those floral motifs typical of the Formative Phase.

Part of one side wall of the *mukhasala* has also been uncovered, and this indicates that it was built up of undecorated blocks of stone with a simple grille window in the centre. A consideration of the junction between the shrine and *mukhasala* (see page 38) makes it apparent that there is no space between the two, and that the front wall of the shrine has been used also as the back wall of the *mukhasala*. This, as we have seen, is typical of a Group A temple. The abrupt nature of the junction between shrine and *mukhasala* is seen along the base moulding too, where the decorative carving on the top level of moulding is interrupted so as to leave a *chaitya* arch half-carved.

Satrughnesvar Group at Bhubanesvar. Closely allied in date and style to the Parasuramesvar are the three temples known as the Satrughnesvar, Lakshmanesvar, and Bharatesvar, named from left to right as one stands facing them. All three temples have been partially reconstructed with the aid of several hundred plain blocks of stone, while a large number of the original sculpted blocks are stacked neatly within the compound. The shrines are much smaller than the Parasuramesvar, but in both architectural and sculptural treatment they are closely akin to it. All these temples stand today as shrines alone, but there seems little doubt that each was originally fronted by a *mukhasala*. Panigrahi, who was connected with the restoration, tells us categorically that there was a rectangular plinth to the Satrughnesvar,[3] and today, despite the planting of a small garden directly in front of the shrine, it is still possible to find traces of this plinth. Panigrahi maintains too that he found at the site a fragment of grille with part of a figure,[4] and he suggests that the Satrughnesvar temple *mukhasala* had a grille window of dancing

Erotic fragment from Satrughnesvar temple.





Dancing Siva from the Satrughnesvar group of Bhubanesvar.

figures similar to what we see on the Parasuramesvar. We have had no luck so far in tracing this fragment in the store room of the Museum, but if found, it would link the Satrughnesvar group of temples even closer to the Parasuramesvar.

Base mouldings of all three shrines are typical of Group A temples and so is the treatment of side niches with that characteristic band of blocks carved as the foreparts of lions and elephants. On the Lakshmanesvar temple, some of these blocks are carved with a flying *gandharva* or a hunting scene, and it appears that while the lion and elephant was a more common theme, the motif had not yet become standardized, thus allowing for variations. It is from the Satrughnesvar temple that the inscribed *astagraha* lintel lying in the veranda of the State Museum was taken. The treatment of the *grahas* is typical and the labels above four of them are still intact and this again is evidence of affinity with the Parasuramesvar.

The Bharatesvar temple is the best preserved of the three shrines, and is a charming younger cousin to the Parasuramesvar. It is a much smaller temple, its *sikhara* rising to a height of a mere 20 feet. The now missing *parsva-devatas* seem to have been sculpted from separate slabs of stone, but the images in the side niches are carved from the blocks that form the temple wall. They are all Saiva in character, and include an elegant dancing Siva and a rhythmically balanced dancing Ardhanarisvar. The recessed *bandhana*, separating the wall section from the *sikhara*, is peopled with figures from various mythological stories and the mouldings on either side of the *bandhana* are characteristic of a Group A temple. The lintel immediately above the shrine doorway contains an unusual panel depicting Siva and Parvati seated on mount Kailasa with a scene of the worship of the bull Nandi below Siva, and the head of her lion mount below Parvati. Flanking this panel is a *kanya*, and beyond are little shrines, the one on the left containing a *linga* and that on the right housing a small head.

The *vajramastaka* on the front *raha* of the Bharatesvar displays an identical theme and similar treatment to what we have seen on the Parasuramesvar with a forceful depiction of Ravana trying to shake mount Kailasa on which are seated Siva and Parvati. Above is a ten-armed dancing Siva and beyond the terminating *kirtimukha* is a seated Lakulisa. There is an animated depiction in a side niche of many-armed Nataraja, holding a snake aloft between two upper arms. The pose is identical to that of the loose Nataraja grille which Panigrahi sees as owing its inspiration to the Chalukyan caves at Badami.[5] Such a pose for a dancing Siva is a frequent one, and to us it seems far-fetched to trace inspiration or influence from such a distance. Nataraja on the Bharatesvar is shown with *urdhva linga*, and an unusual feature of the depiction is the inclusion of Kartikeya on his peacock in place of the more usual figure of Ganesa. Among loose images is one of Kartikeya seated cross-legged on his peacock, and a damaged relief of Lakulisa with a halo and a topknot. So close is the resemblance of the topknot to the *usnisa*, that but for the presence of the *lakuta* the image could have been mistaken for that of the Buddha.



Svarnajalesvar temple at Bhubanesvar.

Several fragments lying around in the compound of the Satrughnesvar group depict erotic figures and provide evidence of the very early appearance of this motif in Orissan art. Despite Panigrahi's undoubted familiarity with the art and culture of Orissa, he maintains that amorous couples on early temples "do not represent sexual positions".[6] However, many of the fragments from the Satrughnesvar group depict couples in specific sexual positions and one panel includes a third person as an onlooker. *Mithunas* or loving couples with arms around each other are plentiful. The occasional *alasa kanyas* are also to be seen—*toranas* behind doors, *darpanas* looking into mirrors, or just *alasas* or indolent maidens.

All indications are that the three temples of the Satrughnesvar group belong to Group A of the Formative Phase, at a time when a rectangular *mukhasala* was built up directly against the front wall of the shrines. The base mouldings, treatment of side niches, identical carving of the *vajramastaka* on the front *raha*, speak of contemporaneity with the Parasuramesvar, and we see no reason for placing these temples earlier.[7]

Svarnajalesvar Temple at Bhubanesvar. This attractive temple reaching up to some 30 feet in height, stands today as a shrine alone, in a totally neglected condition with shrubs and a tree growing out of it. From its close similarity to the temples of the Satrughnesvar group and to the Parasuramesvar, we would unhesitatingly suggest that it was once fronted by a rectangular *mukhasala*.The temple has been taken up for conservation and we trust that attempts will be made to uncover traces of the *mukhasala* plinth.

The treatment of base mouldings and of side niches is characteristic of Group A temples, as are the decorative details. Two of the *parsva-devatas* are intact and they have been carved from separate slabs of stone. The immediate sides of the prepared niches contain images of worshippers and attendants that are so identical in style and treatment to those on the Parasuramesvar niches, that we would go so far as to say that the same hand was at work on both temples. Above the shrine doorway is the remains of a precisely carved *astagraha* lintel in which five *grahas* are intact. The treatment is familiar but there are no inscribed labels. High above the doorway, on the front *raha*, is a badly damaged relief of Siva and Parvati seated within the lower portion of a dotted *vajramastaka*. The iconography is complete and includes a rather bizarre carving of the bull Nandi who is so humped as to resemble a camel. Dancing Siva and seated Lakulisa complete the arch. There is a great deal of *jali* work and several fragments of *mithuna* couples and of *nayikas*. The recessed *bandhana* is peopled with figures from the *Ramayana*, and the mouldings on either side are typical of Group A temples.

Three Minor Shrines at Bhubanesvar. In the fields a short distance from the Parasuramesvar and the Svarnajalesvar, stands the much ruined Talesvar shrine of which only the front doorway and part of the right wall remains. It is however quite clearly a Group A temple with characteristic base mouldings, side niches, and decorative motifs, and the lintel above the doorway has a depiction of eight *grahas* without inscribed labels. The only surviving image from the temple is Ekapada Siva who is shown with *urdhva linga*. The god has a halo and holds a trident and *akshamala* in two upper hands, while one lower hand is in the *varada mudra*, the gesture of granting a wish.





Left. Talesvar temple at Bhubanesvar. *Right*. Carving from the Mohini temple at Bhubanesvar.

The tiny Paschimesvar shrine, some fifteen feet in height, stands in the compound next to the Vaital and Sisiresvar temples in Bhubanesvar. The treatment of base mouldings, of side niches, and of decorative motifs assign it to Formative Group A. The one *parsva-devata* niche that is intact contains an image of eight-armed Mahisamardini, holding various weapons including bow and arrow, shield, sword and javelin. She has one leg raised and placed on the demon, and one hand presses back the buffalo head while another thrusts a trident into his neck. The front *raha* has the standard dotted double arch, but here the lower portion contains only a floral motif while the circle above has the usual Nataraja image.

A tiny half-buried shrine, similar in size and style to the Paschimesvar temple, is to be seen in the Yamesvar compound. The entire wall of the temple is buried underground and only part of the *sikhara* is visible, but decorative details suggest that it belongs to Formative Phase A.

Mohini Temple at Bhubanesvar. On the south bank of the Bindu Sarovar tank stands the Mohini temple, the most sparsely decorated example of our early group. While base mouldings and side niches are typical of Formative Phase A, there is no decorative carving at all. For example, we see below the side niches that familiar band divided into little blocks which in other temples are carved into lions and elephants: here the blocks are left plain. The *parsva-devatas* are the three familiar deities, Ganesa, Kartikeya and Parvati. Kartikeya stands with his peacock to one side, while standing Parvati has a female attendant on either side, and a lion and a jackal in front. One side niche contains two unidentified male figures, one carrying an axe and the other a trident and both depicted with haloes. The *parsva-devatas* as well as the figures in the side niches are carved from the blocks of stone that make up the wall of the shrine. There is a plain recessed *bandhana* and above this, the *pancha-ratha sikhara* is totally undecorated, except for the

occurrence of *amalakis* dividing the *konaka* into five units of three levels each.

The *mukhasala*, a modern restoration from plain blocks of stone, is a pillared hall with pilasters against the side walls—pilasters that are visible from the exterior of the temple. The reconstruction was in the capable hands of Kedarnath Mahapatra and one assumes that he reproduced the pillars exactly as they once existed. The *mukhasala* has been rebuilt directly against the front wall of the shrine, and assuming once again that the restoration was accurately done, this is typical of a Group A temple. The front *raha* above the flat roof of the *mukhasala* is unembellished and hardly projects at all.

Within the sanctum is a draped image of many-armed Chamunda standing on a prostrate male figure and brandishing a sword with her uppermost hands. There is some doubt in our mind as to whether this temple was originally a Devi shrine, as a Devi temple would contain three forms of the goddess in the *parsva-devata* niches. Ganesa, Kartikeya, and Parvati in these niches are normally evidence of a Siva temple. There seems to be some uncertainty too as to whether the temple was left incomplete or whether its uncarved nature was intentional. To us it is clear that a shrine would not be consecrated and in worship if the carving were incomplete, and we would assume that its plain surfaces were intentional.

Svapnesvar Temple at Kualo. Standing in splendid isolation in the midst of paddy fields along the banks of the Brahmani river is the *panchayatana* temple at Kualo near the town of Talcher. The main temple exists today as a badly damaged shrine alone but there is clear evidence of the one-time existence of a *mukhasala*, and the plinth foundations of this hall are distinctly visible. Three of the four corner shrines of this *panchayatana* temple are in a reasonably well-preserved condition.

The Kualo shrine is a tall one, and the recessed *bandhana* carved with a frieze of elephants is itself at a height of some twenty feet from the ground. The tower has mostly fallen away with the result that we have no idea how the *raha* decoration was completed, but what little remains shows that the *sikhara* was clearly *pancharatha*. Two *amalakis* still *in situ* on the *konaka* indicate that the levels were divided into three sections each and dotted arches and *kanyas* are apparent in the decoration. The temple displays all the features that we have come to regard as indicative of Group A—base mouldings of category I, a typical treatment of side niches and the entire range of early decorative details.

That familiar row of blocks carved as elephants and lions that we usually find below the side niches is to be seen here below the *parsva-devata* niches as well. Ganesa in his *parsva-devata* niche is seen with his hair in tight curls, and without his mouse and flanked by bands of intricate scrolls. Only the lowermost portion of the niche containing Mahisamardini is intact, but enough remains to identify the figure. Images in the side niches include Ardhanarisvar, Parvati, Siva, and the river goddesses. Arms, shoulders, and legs are inelegant and ankles and wrists are even more markedly clumsy. All the figures are carved from the blocks of stone that make up the temple wall.





Left. Main shrine of the severely damaged Kualo temple. *Right.* Corner shrine from Kualo.

The four corner temples are decorated in identical style to the main shrine. Temple I is of special interest because the entrance doorway has above it the *astagraha* lintel that we usually find on the main shrine doorway. The eight *grahas* are treated in familiar style but there are no inscribed labels. *Parsva-devatas* Ganesa and Mahisamardini are recognisable. Temple 3 is the best preserved of the four shrines and has an elaborately decorated doorway with the lintel above depicting the worship of the *linga*. The frontal *raha* contains a dotted double arch with dancing Siva in the lower semi-circular portion, a *trimurti* in the circle above and the usual *kirtimukha* crowning the arch. Mahisamardini is recognisable in one of the *parsva-devata* niches, and the side niches include images of Ardhanarisvar and a river goddess. The wig-style headdress is clearly seen on some of the male figures. A number of loose images and architectural fragments are lying around, and among these is more than one Saiva figure with *urdhva linga* and with hair in ringlets.

The main shrine as well as the four corner shrines are dedicated to Siva and contain *lingas*, and the walls of all the five shrines contain images of

Ganesa, Mahisamardini, and Kartikeya in their *parsva-devata* niches. In most other parts of India a *panchayatana* temple dedicated to Siva has corner shrines dedicated to Durga, Ganesa, Surya, and Vishnu. In Orissa, however, we find that the corner shrines are invariably dedicated to the same god who is worshipped in the main shrine.

Durga Temple at Baidesvar. Standing on the south bank of the Mahanadi river, some sixty kilometres from the town of Cuttack, is a tiny shrine in *khakhara* style, only some twelve feet in height. Its base mouldings, the treatment of side niches, as well as decorative details clearly assign it to Group A of the Formative Phase. The barrel-vaulted roof is constructed in two levels, with plain blocks of stone bordered with bands of rosettes and pendants. The two narrow sides of the barrel-vaulted roof are decorated with *vajramastakas* which on one side contains Siva Ekapada below and Ganesa in the circle above, while the other side depicts Siva as Andakasura-vadha with Nataraja above. This little early *khakhara* temple is of the *vaitalika* category and contains an image of Mahisamardini within the shrine. More will be said a little later regarding the *vaitalika* type of temple when we consider its most important example[8] which we have placed in Formative Phase B.

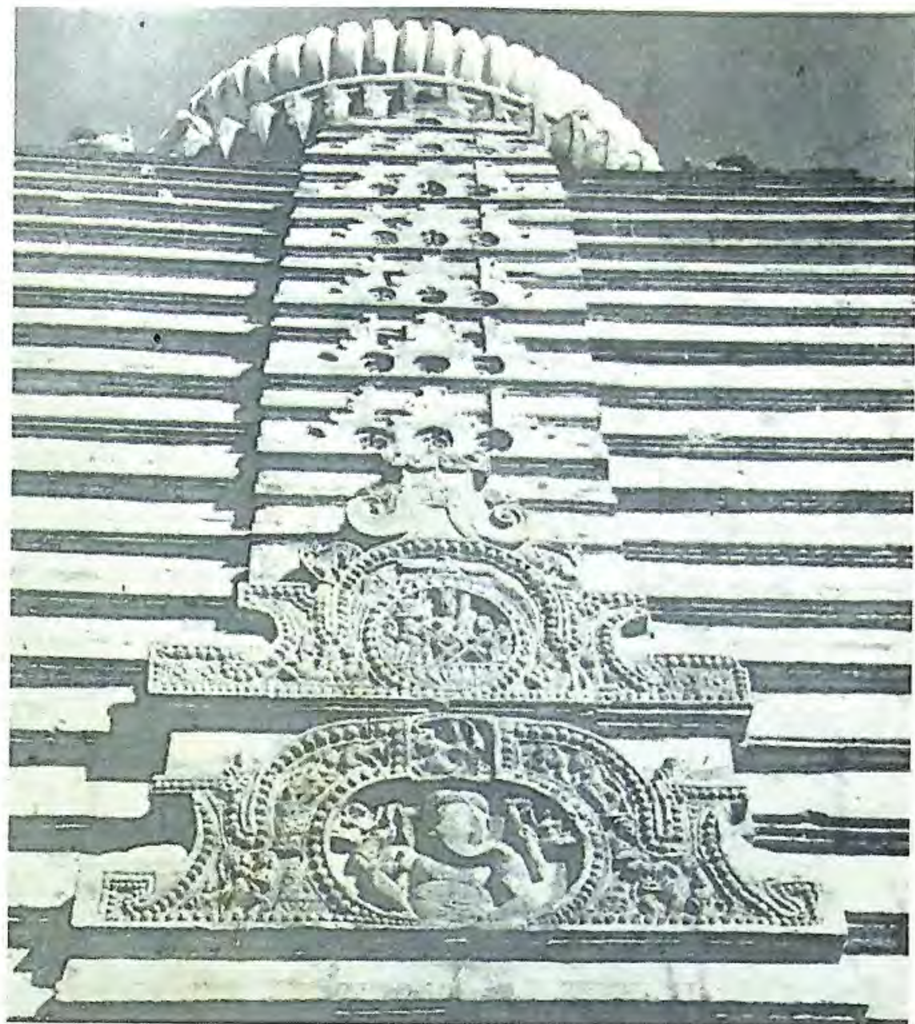
Madhukesvar Temple at Mukhalingam. The vibrantly sculpted, large *astaparivara* Madhukesvar temple stands at Mukhalingam on the banks of the Vamsadhara river. It is situated today in north Andhra, but its architectural design and its decorative features certainly warrant its inclusion in the Orissan group, although it displays certain features that set it apart from the standard Orissan temple.

Located in the centre of the present-day town of Mukhalingam, the entire temple, until a few years back, was covered with a thick layer of plaster that obscured the outlines of the figures carved on its walls. Today all this has been successfully removed and the temple presents us with a splendid array of dynamic images and a riot of exquisitely carved leafy and floral scrolls in the most excellent state of preservation. The eight units of the Madhukesvar consist of the main temple comprising shrine and *mukhasala*, four shrines placed at the four corners of the courtyard, and three barrel-vaulted shrines placed in the centre of the three courtyard walls and corresponding in position to the entrance gateway leading into the temple enclosure. The Madhukesvar is one of the most exciting temples, both from the point of view of its architectural design and because of its particular combination of sculptural themes and decorative features. If we are devoting extra space to a discussion of this monument, it is because of its unique importance and its inherent interest. It is, in fact, one of the most significant of early temples from any location in India.

The main shrine is unusual in its treatment and apart from the familiar base mouldings of Category I, the rest of the wall is undecorated and built up of plain blocks of stone. There are no *parsva-devata* niches such as we see on all other Orissan shrines, and no side niches either. The *sikhara* too presents us with a variation from the standard Orissan norm, and consists of a series of undecorated receding *pidhas*. The only carving is a dotted *vajramastaka* on a mildly projecting central *raha*. The flat, front *raha* con-

Durga temple at Baidesvar.





Sikhara of the Madhukesvar temple at Mukhalingam.

tains in its lower portion an image of dancing Siva, shown with *urdhva linga* and holding a snake in two upraised arms. The dotted circle above depicts a royal couple standing under an umbrella. Lions are placed at the neck of the temple and above is a double *amalaka* topped with a *kalasa* and trident.

The rectangular flat-roofed *mukhasala* also presents us with a variation in plan. At the four corners of the *mukhasala* are placed four miniature shrines that add great elegance to the design of the structure. These shrines are solid and only their exterior elevation is projected against the outer wall. Each of them is treated in miniature as a typical shrine of Formative Phase A, complete with *parsva-devata* and side niches, and with a *pancharatha sikhara* embellished with dotted *vajramastakas* on the *rahas*. Base mouldings are at the highest level on the main shrine, lowest on the miniature *mukhasala* shrines, and at a level in between, on the *mukhasala*. The interior has twelve pillars and an equal number of pilasters, all with plain square shafts and a roll at the top. On the ceiling are large circular rosettes with three rows of petals, and there are five of these down the central bay.

A consideration of the joint between shrine and *mukhasala* reveals that there is no separate wall joining the two structures, and this, as we have seen, is a clear indication of a Group A temple. Carved against the rear

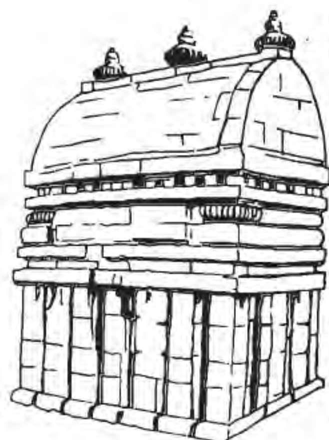
walls of the miniature shrines projected against the corners of the *mukhasala* towards the shrine end is one side niche and the *parsva-devata* niche, with the walls of the main shrine commencing directly from this. We shall see in a later Group B temple with similar miniature shrines projected against the corners of the *mukhasala*, that the jointing is competently handled with a separate wall connecting the two sets of structures.[9]

The placing of doors and windows on the *mukhasala* is quite irregular, and this too is an early feature characteristic of a Group A temple. There is a large entrance doorway on the front east wall and a smaller one on the south wall. The south wall has no window at all, while the north has three narrow grille windows. The main east entrance is decorated with bands of ornate scrollwork displaying an unparalleled delicacy of touch. While the scroll is basically similar to that on several other Group A temples, it is here the work of a master sculptor. Beyond the scroll is a broad band carved with the meandering stem of a luxuriant creeper with gracefully poised *kanyas* and couples standing under the foliage. The final band contains various familiar decorative motifs including the *purnaghata*, *kirtimukha* and half-lotus.

The south doorway is similar in conception, but simpler than the main



View of the Madhukesvar temple.



Barrel-vaulted shrine of the Madhukesvar temple.

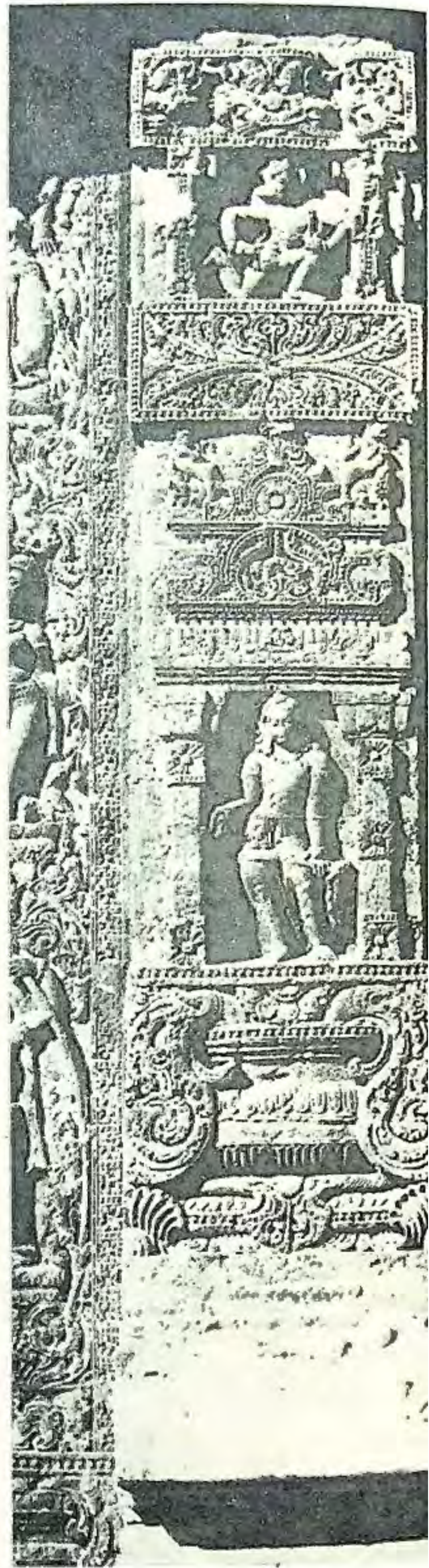
one. Scrolls and *gelbai* bands are delicately yet precisely carved. Above the doorway is a large dotted *vajramastaka* topped with the usual *kirtimukha*. The lower portion depicts Siva as Andhakasuramurti, wearing a garland of skulls and shown with *urdhva linga*, with Parvati, sage Bhringi, and the bull Nandi completing the scene. The circle above contains many-armed dancing Siva in a frenzy of movement, accompanied by Parvati, the bull Nandi and dancing Ganesa. An intriguing detail is that while the drummer to the left holds two vertical drums of the type we see in the rest of Orissa, the drummer to the right has the horizontally held *mridangam* drum of the south.

The southern doorway is not placed in the centre of the *mukhasala* wall, but is located towards the shrine, and to its left is a single sculptured niche depicting a vigorous twelve-armed dancing Siva accompanied by Parvati, sage Bhringi, and Nandi. To the right are a row of six niches with images of Narasimha, Varaha, Kartikeya, Durga, and two forms of Siva. The powerful four-armed figure of Ugra Narasimha is shown holding Hiranyakasipu off the ground, while tearing into his stomach with his claws. Long ringlets are carved for the lion's mane, for Hiranyakasipu's hair, and for the hair of the demon below. Four-armed Varaha is depicted in his classic pose, upholding goddess earth whom he has just rescued from the depths of the cosmic ocean. The demon naga figure he is crushing down has his hair in the *sikhandaka* fashion which is normally reserved for Kartikeya and Kaumari alone.

Figures are generally carved standing rigidly frontal, the positioning of arms and legs is often cramped and clumsy, and there is no indication of bone or sinew. However, the potency, vigour, and might of the deities is clearly conveyed. Each niche is flanked by pilasters carved with *purnaghata*, scroll, and half-lotus, and is completed as a barrel-vaulted shrine with a miniature dotted *vajramastaka* decorating it. The style of the carving, as well as the decorative details, indicate affinity with other Group A temples.

The north wall of the *mukhasala* has three grille windows interrupting the monotony of a whole row of sculptured niches. The windows are of exactly the same size as the niches and each is of a different geometric pattern, one treated in squares, the second in circles, and the third as a *svastika*. The total number of niches, seven, remains the same as on the south wall. Among the images are those of Indra, Ekapada Siva, and Harihara. On the Siva side, Harihara has matted hair, holds a snake and has a trident in the form of an *ayudha purusha*—a small male figure with trident on his head. (A similar *ayudha purusha* is seen on the temples of the Satrughnesvar group at Bhubanesvar.) On the Vishnu side he wears a tall square crown, holds a *gada* and has an *ayudha purusha* with a *chakra* on his head. Harihara shown with *urdhva linga*, stands rigidly frontal on a platform beneath which is shown the bull Nandi on one side, and a part-hunan figure that must be Garuda on the other. Carved on the various units of the Madhukesvar temple are a number of *mithuna* couples of which only one or two are explicitly sexual. One such explicit scene decorates the double arch on the miniature shrine at the north end of the *mukhasala*.

The flat roof of the *mukhasala* has three levels of decorated mouldings



Far left. Side doorway to Madhukesvar *mukhasala*.
Left. Detail from main doorway to Madhukesvar *mukhasala*.

and above this are spouts for the drainage of rain water. Each is sculpted as a naga figure holding a water-pot in his hands, and there are four on each of the long sides of the *mukhasala* and two on the front. An eleventh naga is seen at ground level to the right of the main shrine, where the *abhisheka* water that is poured over the shrine image emerges. In front of the *mukhasala* is a large semi-circular step, and shrine and *mukhasala* stand together on a common base. This common base for the two structures is seen clearly on several temples of Group B and it seems likely that it was a more usual feature of the early temples than is today realised: a slight lowering of the ground level around the temples will probably confirm this.

The four shrines placed in the four corners of the courtyard are in every way representative of a Group A temple. Base mouldings, carving of side and *parsva-devata* niches, the familiar band of lion and elephant blocks, and decorative motifs are all typical. All four corner shrines are dedicated to Siva and each has a small Nandi in front, facing the *linga* within. However, the lintel of each shrine is carved with a different image. The lintel block of temple 1 contains a figure of Surya in his chariot with Aruna driving the seven horses. That of temple 2 portrays seated Siva and Parvati. Temple 3 curiously, presents us with a depiction of two elephants, while temple 4 has an image of Ugra Narasimha. Temple 2 has an *astagraha* lintel treated in familiar style without any inscribed labels, and this placing is similar to what we saw on the *panchayatana* temple at Kualo, where too the *graha* lintel was on a corner shrine, rather than being above the main shrine doorway. The dotted *vajramastaka* above displays Lakulisa accompanied by four disciples, seated in the lower section, and dancing Siva in the upper circle. Temple 3 has an altogether exquisitely worked doorway with bands of intertwined scrolls that display an unmatched delicacy of treatment.

The three barrel-vaulted shrines placed in the centre of the courtyard walls are of the early *khakhara* type known as *vaitalika*. From the rear, these shrines are divided into seven plain vertical panels, above which is the roof section with a single *amalaki* along the *konaka*. Then follows the smooth rounded head portion, topped with three *amalakis* with *kalasa*. Above the doorway is a projecting *raha* carved as a *vajramastaka*. Base mouldings are of the familiar category I variety. The *vaitalika* shrine on the north is of special interest as it has a set of *saptamatrikas* sculpted around the doorway, with a *dvarapalika* on either side holding a trident. Starting from the lower left we find three-headed Brahmi with her swan, Mahesvari with her bull, Kaumari, Vaishnavi, then the lintel block containing *gajalakshmi*, Varahi with fish, bowl and buffalo, Aindri with elephant, and on the right side of the doorway is squatting Chamunda and Ganesa with his mouse. Virabhadra is absent here, perhaps due to lack of space. The images all have haloes and they are fine pieces of carving, with a gentle, benign expression on the faces of the goddesses.

The inner gateway leading into the main temple area is a rectangular flat-roofed structure with three receding roof levels topped with an *amalaka*. The decoration of these levels includes the *jharavali*, stepped merlons, scrolls, rosettes and other familiar motifs of Formative Phase A. This gateway has some exquisite scrollwork and ornate meandering creepers with gracefully





Above. Astagraha lintel from the Madhukesvar. *Far left*. Base moulding of corner shrine. *Left*. Detail from *mukhasala*.

Bottom. Inner gateway.
Right. Outer gateway.
Below. Detail of south doorway to *mukhasala*.

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positioned couples carved between. The innermost band contains an unusual and highly realistic portrayal of three sages repeated in three panels. Each sage is an individual, not to be mistaken with any other, and it is apparent that the artist responsible for carving these figures was particularly interested in portraiture.





Varaha avatar of Vishnu from *mukhasala*, and Dancing Siva from *mukhasala*.

The outer gateway into the temple enclosure is a rectangular structure with a roof in the form of a stepped barrel-vault. The sides of the gateway are carved with three niches of identical size, and on one of them the base mouldings have been indicated with little blocks cut for later carving into lions and elephants. This gateway too has base mouldings of Category I that is seen throughout the temple complex.

The Madhukesvar temple at Mukhalingam reveals certain unusual features, prime among which are the undecorated wall of the main shrine, its *pidha*-type *sikhara*, the three *khakhara* shrines of *vaitalika* type along the side walls of the courtyard, and the appearance of two entrance gateways. It reveals, however, numerous familiar features that have led us to assign this temple to Formative Phase A in the early development of the Orissan temple. These include:

(*i*) The existence of a rectangular, flat-roofed and pillared *mukhasala*.

(*ii*) The irregular placing of doors and windows on the *mukhasala*.

(*iii*) The elementary nature of the joint between shrine and *mukhasala*, where a separate joining wall is absent.

(*iv*) Base mouldings of Category I that are seen in all other Group A temples.

(*v*) The little lion and elephant blocks so popular in Group A temples, though also continuing in many Group B examples.

(*vi*) The *triratha* treatment of the corner shrines and the familiar carving of side niches.

(*vii*) The *astagraha* lintel on corner temple 2, as at Kualo.

(*viii*) The dotted *vajramastakas* seen throughout Group A shrines.

(*ix*) The appearance of haloes on most figures, divine and otherwise.

(*x*) The early ringlets hairdo for male figures.

(*xi*) Familiar decorative details of Formative Phase A, including rows of dots, stepped merlons, *jharavali*, *jali* work, *purnaghatas*, rosettes, bands of lotus petals, *gelbai*, half-lotuses, *kirtimukhas*, and floral scrolls.

The elaborate nature of the *astaparivara* shrine with its two gateways suggests the possibility that the Madhukesvar is among the latest monuments of Formative Phase A. This temple with its wealth of sculptural material, its abundance of finely wrought decorative details, and the spirited quality of its vibrant carving, is one of the most significant of early temples in India.

Ruins at Jajpur. Close to the famous late Viraja temple at Jajpur are the remains of an early shrine belonging to Formative Phase A. The stones are lying around in large heaps and the local school has made some attempt to re-erect the shrine, though not with much success. One carved fragment represents Siva as Ardhanarisvar, with part of the bull Nandi visible to one side. The figure is depicted with *urdhva linga* as we see in Saiva images throughout Group A temples. The pilaster flanking the image is decorated with *purnaghatas* and half-lotuses, features typical of this phase, and the *bandhana* frieze depicts scenes from the *Ramayana*.

Judging from the many early sculptures inserted into the courtyard walls of later temples, there must have been more than one temple at Jajpur belonging to the Formative Phase. Several blocks lying around near the later Somesvar temple are decorated with dotted arches and one such fragment depicts Lakulisa seated within an arch, with the *yogapatta* around his knees and the *lakuta* resting against his left shoulder. Another early piece, now inserted into the courtyard wall of the Viraja temple, is an image of Kartikeya seated in *lalitasana* on his peacock, and there are several loose images of seated Ganesa. Jajpur appears to have been the scene of much activity during the Formative Phase, and it is unfortunate that none of these early temples is still standing.

Isvar Temple at Paikapada. Situated in a picturesque rocky glen, some distance from the village of Paikapada, is a group of early Orissan temples. The main temple complex belongs to a somewhat later phase, but adjoining this is the small Isvar temple consisting of a shrine that reaches up to a height of about 15 feet, with a low, flat-roofed *mukhasala* in front. Three corner shrines stand relatively intact, indicating that this was a *panchayatana* temple, and there is also a tiny Nandi shrine facing the temple.

Grille window detail of Isvar temple at Paikapada.



The walls and *sikhara* of the shrine are both *triratha* and are built up of plain undecorated blocks of sandstone. Images carved from separate slabs of stone are placed in the *parsva-devata* niches, but there is no decorative carving on these niches and no base mouldings. *Parsva-devatas* are Ganesa with his mouse, seated Kartikeya with peacock and cock, and Durga, and all the images have haloes. There is no separate wall joining the shrine to the *mukhasala* which is also built up of undecorated blocks of stone. Its walls

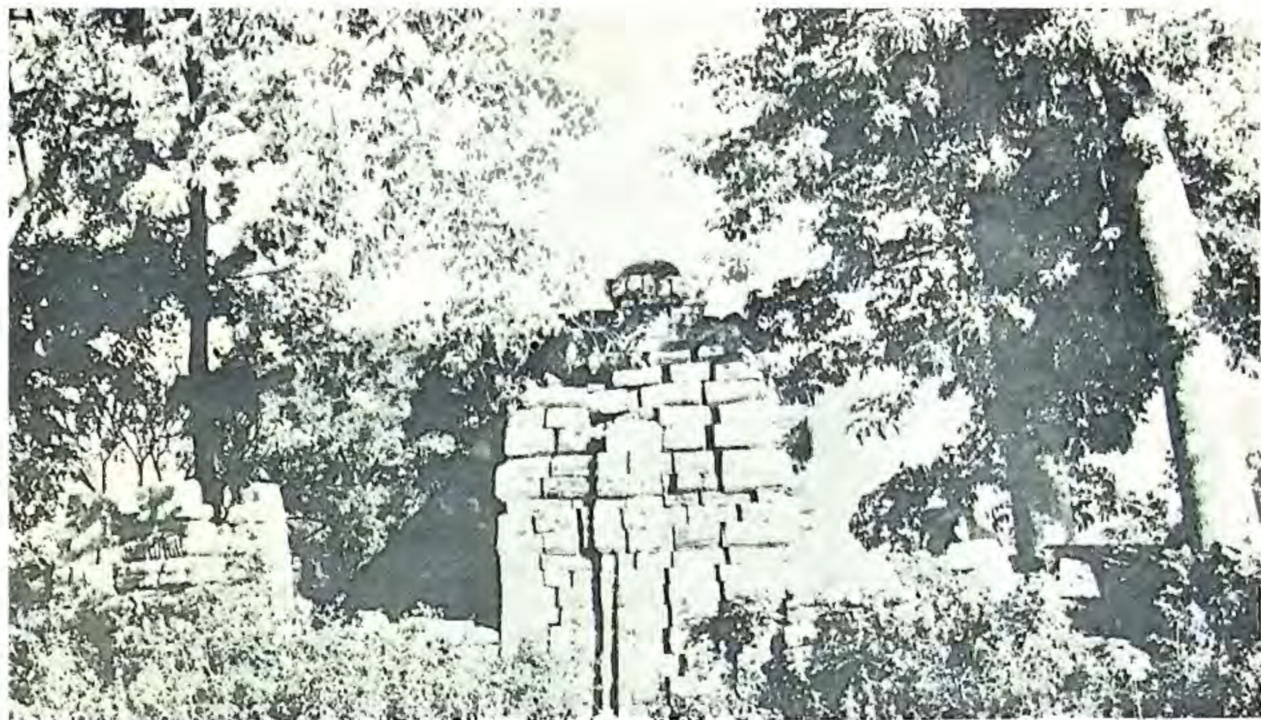


The Amangai temple situated on an island in the Mahanadi.

are only some six feet in height and the flat double roof has mostly collapsed. The rectangular hall once contained eight pillars, of which four are still partially intact. One doorway and two windows open into the *mukhasala*, and the intact window is in the form of a *chakra* grille. There are ten undecorated niches on the outer walls and these house an interesting array of images. Apart from three seated images of Siva, we see Gangadhara, Ekapada, Lakulisa, and seated Ardhanarisvar, all shown with *urdhva linga*. Niches flanking the doorway contain figures of Surya and Vishnu.

In the total absence of decorative details, it is difficult to be categorical about the exact chronological placing of this temple. However, on the basis of the *triratha* shrine, the flat-roofed rectangular pillared *mukhasala*, the absence of a separate wall joining shrine and *mukhasala*, and the small dimensions of the entire temple, we would tentatively assign the Isvar temple to Formative Phase A.

Amangai Temple on an Island in the Mahanadi. The Amangai temple stands isolated on a tiny island in the Mahanadi river and provides us with apparently contradictory evidence in the form of an early shrine fronted by an advanced *mukhasala*. The temple presents a ruined appearance with the top of the *sikhara* broken and its niches bereft of images. The shrine has three levels of base mouldings belonging to category I as in all Group A temples. The wall is *triratha* with a central *parsva-devata* niche and two side niches finished as barrel-vaulted shrines embellished with a dotted double arch. The pilasters flanking these niches are decorated with *purnaghatas*, half lotuses and *kirtimukhas*. The side niches have their own set of base mouldings including the band of little blocks carved as lions and elephants that occurs so frequently in Group A temples. There is a plain recessed *bandhana*, and the *pancharatha sikhara* above is divided into five units of two levels each. All features about the shrine assign it to Formative Phase A.



The isolated and much ruined Jain temple site at Subei.

The *mukhasala*, built of plain blocks of stone, provides us with contrary evidence. The joint with the shrine is most competently handled. The roof, though partly fallen away, appears definitely to have been of the *pidha* variety and it seems also to have reached a pyramidal apex. There is, in addition, a level of mouldings half-way up the wall, apparently dividing it into upper and lower sculptural levels. This last feature comes in only in the Late Established Phase of the Orissan temple. It is our suggestion that the Amangai temple was built during the Formative Phase in the development of the Orissan temple, and that it originally had a flat-roofed rectangular *mukhasala*. This must, in some manner, have been severely and irremediably damaged, resulting in its being replaced at a later stage by the present *mukhasala*.

Jain Site at Subei. Standing in picturesque isolation in the midst of scrub forest in the Koraput district is a Jain monument near the village of Subei. Within an oval enclosure with a low wall all around, is a series of some ten small shrines, but the entire site is much damaged and only two of the shrines are still standing. It would appear that each was a *triratha* structure with a low tower topped with an *amalaka*. Base mouldings appear to have belonged to category I and along the door jambs is evidence of square and circular rosettes enclosed within dotted squares. Each shrine contains a slab carved with a seated image of a Jain *tirthankara* with his identifying animal on the throne immediately below him. Unfortunately all the images are highly weather-beaten and outlines are blurred. One slab depicts a 12-armed goddess, who is perhaps to be identified as Chakresvari, the *sasanadevi* of the first *tirthankara* Adinatha. We are told that the goddess may be portrayed with any number of arms from four to twelve, and among the objects she holds is a *vajra* and sword. We would suggest that this Jain monument was constructed during the Formative Phase A in the development of the early Orissan temple.

Group B of the Formative Phase includes nine temples and a Buddhist monastery, all located in the central area of Tosala, and we have set these monuments apart from those of Group A on the basis of three main features. The first is the achievement of a more skilful joint between shrine and *mukhasala* indicating that the architects were by now familiar with the process of adding a hall in front of the shrine. The *mukhasala* is no longer built directly onto the front wall of the shrine with the two side niches on its front wall being included within the *mukhasala* as it was in Group A temples. These side niches now form part of the exterior decoration of the temple, and the *mukhasala* has its own back wall built to commence directly from the broad pilasters flanking the shrine doorway. Gradually, as the architects gathered further experience, a wall connecting the two structures was also added, and we see the achievement of this maturity within Group B itself.

The second feature setting these temples apart from those of Group A is the appearance of a new and more ornate type of base moulding that we have labelled category II. The mouldings are now in four levels, of which the topmost is comprised of narrow receding bands decorated with half lotuses, *jharavali*, rope bands and stepped merlons, and the lowest is a high undecorated *khura*. It is the second and third levels which are characteristic of category II mouldings: these are rounded in section, connected by three large leafy scrolls, and treated as a luxuriant overflowing *purnaghata*. The mouldings below the *parsva-devata* niches commence at a lower level and are somewhat differently treated. The first level of this moulding is identical with that of the shrine, while its next two levels are connected by a broad recessed band of *jali*-work with reclining lions carved at the corners. The *parsva-devata* niches project much more than in Group A temples—so much so that their base mouldings, including the lions, are carved along the sides of these niches as well.

The third feature that distinguishes these temples is the sculptural style which shows an advance on temples of Phase A with carving that now has more depth. Figures display a gentle but distinct *dehancement*, they are better proportioned, and there is a definite recognition of the swelling of stomach muscles. While the depiction of the legs of seated figures still seems to cause problems to the artist, arms and shoulders are comfortably handled. The *kanyas* and *mithunas* present us with a graceful conception, and their slender figures are posed in a much more naturalistic fashion.

Some of the temples of group B have pillared *mukhasalas*, while others have abandoned this use of columns. *Mukhasalas* continue to be rectangular in plan, and roofs remain flat. A degree of uniformity seems to have been achieved in the placing of doors and windows: a single doorway that faces the shrine leads into the *mukhasala*, and there is a window in the centre of each of the two side walls. There is still, however, considerable variation in the decorative treatment of *mukhasala* walls.

As in the temples of Group A the *sikhara* is *pancharatha*, and continues to be divided into five horizontal units of three levels each. The temples now have a significant projection of the front *raha* of the *sikhara*—a projection that was presumably necessary to bridge the connection between shrine and *mukhasala*. In Group A temples where the *mukhasala* just used the entire

front wall of the shrine as its own back wall, no such *raha* projection was needed. The large *vajramastaka* decorating the projecting front *raha* takes on a different character in some Phase B temples. The lower portion is no longer treated as a flat semi-circle within which a narrative panel is to be carved, but is now a large deep quadrangle with pilasters within it marking off a square portion for the placement of a scuptured image.

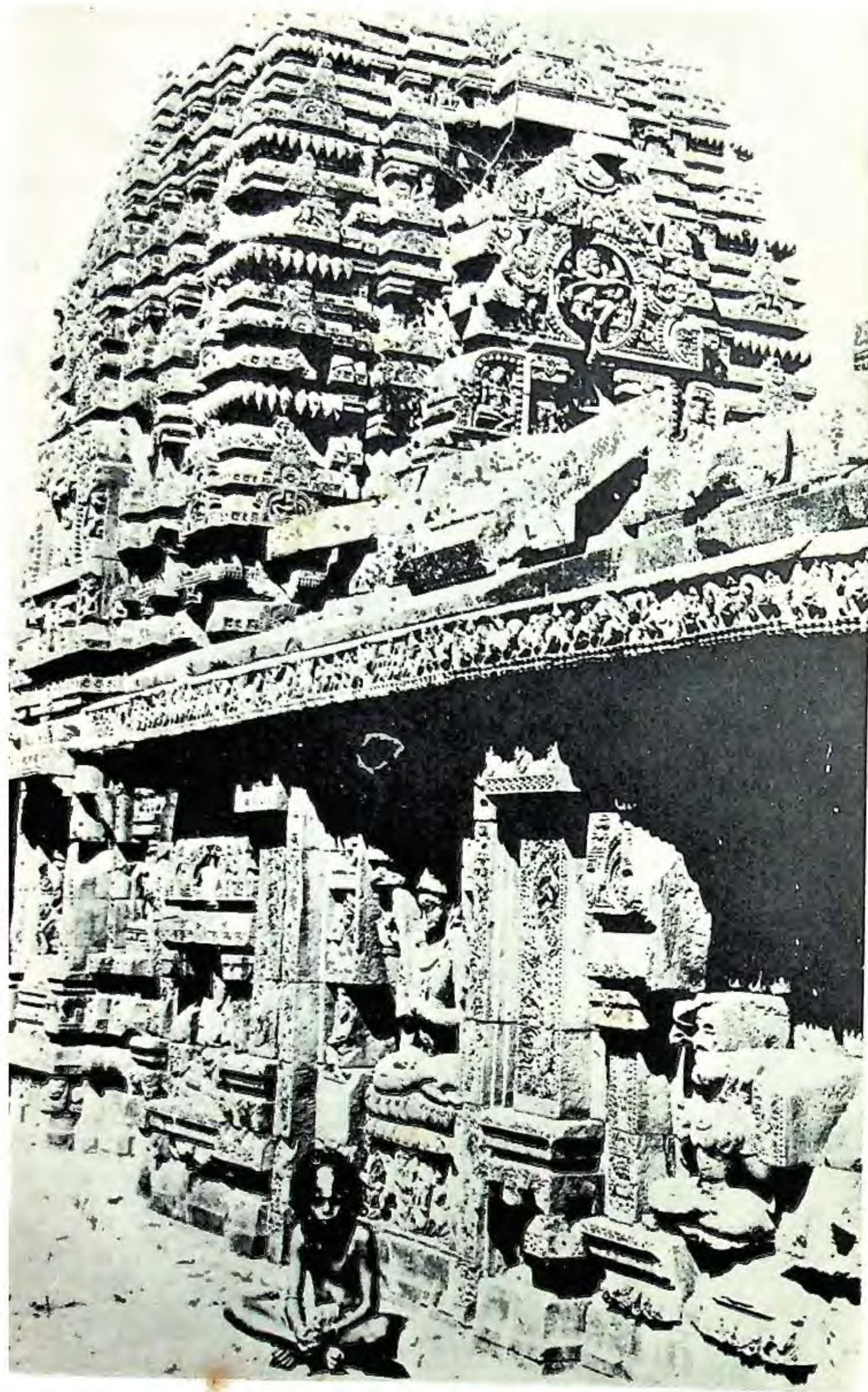
In most of the temples this lower portion is today empty, while the upper circle contains a spirited eight-armed image of dancing Siva, just as we saw in temples of Group A. Above the *kirtimukha* that tops the arch is placed a small *amalaki* and a *kalasa*. Treatment of doorways is much the same as in temples of Group A, with rope bands, gourd bands, *gelbai* and the inevitable *dvarapala* at the base, while in many Group B temples, the *astagraha* lintel continues to be carved above the shrine doorway. Decorative motifs are basically the same as seen during Phase A.

Images from the Markandesvar temple, displaying a distinct *dehancement* in the styling of the human figure.

Markandesvar at Bhubanesvar. In the town of Bhubanesvar, standing within easily accessible distance of each other, are three vividly sculpted temples—the Markandesvar, Sisiresvar, and the Vaital—all belonging to Group B of the Formative Phase. Two of them have shrines of the early *rekha* variety or the *rathayukta*, similar to what we have seen in so many Group A temples, while the third is a fine example of the early *khakhara* type known as the *vaitalika*. Despite this difference, the three shrines are so similar in the style







Sisiresvar temple at Bhubanesvar (see plan on facing page) prior to its partial restoration in modern times.

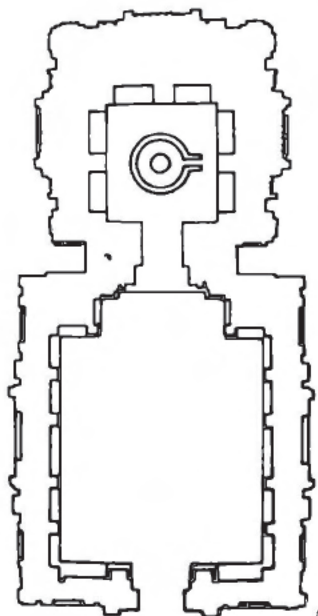
of their sculptures and in their decorative treatment that we are convinced that all three are the work of the same school of sculptors.

The Markandesvar temple stands on the west bank of the Bindu Sarovar tank and appears to be one of the first temples to reveal the new confidence and familiarity in the handling of the joint between shrine and *mukhasala*. Immediately in front of the shrine doorway, forming a vestibule to the shrine, are two large rounded pillars from which was commenced the construction of a back wall for the *mukhasala*. The hall has in recent times been rebuilt with plain blocks of stone, but pictures of the temple taken when it was still in ruins confirms that the present structure closely follows the original, which was also built up of plain undecorated blocks. The *mukhasala* is unpillared and the flat double roof has an undecorated clerestory level.

Above the shrine doorway is a broad *astagraha* lintel carved in familiar style with plain pilasters separating the *grahas*. The door-jambs are unusual in treatment, being divided into large panels containing sculptures of deities. On the left is a seated image of Brahma with three heads and four arms, and above him is Agni with a backdrop of flames, while the right door-jamb contains a depiction of Yama holding a noose.

The shrine, with its tower reaching up to just over 30 feet, is a fine piece of work. The *sikhara* has the prominent projection of the front *raha* that is customary in a Group B temple and contains an elegantly balanced dancing Siva in the upper portion of the *vajramastaka*. Decoration of the *sikhara* includes arches, rosettes, pilasters, *jali*-work, couples, *kanyas* and *yakshas*. The recessed *bandhana* is divided by tiny pilasters into panels that contain figures of gods, *kanyas* and erotic groups. Base mouldings are of category II and are carved with great precision and detail. *Parsva-devata* niches project considerably and contain badly damaged but clearly recognisable images of seated Ganesa with a large tripod of offerings, Kartikeya standing beside his peacock, and standing Parvati.

All the images, both in the *parsva-devata* and in the side niches, are carved from the blocks of stone making up the temple wall, and are not sculpted from separate slabs of stone to be inserted into prepared niches. Various Saiva images, all with haloes and with *urdhva linga* are identifiable in the side niches and include Ardhanarisvar and Ekapada. Niches are flanked by pilasters decorated with *purnaghatas*, rosettes and half-lotuses. Decorative motifs are those we have seen in Group A temples and which continue to be characteristic of Group B.



Sisiresvar Temple at Bhubanesvar. The nearby Sisiresvar temple has a shrine which is identical in treatment to that of the Markandesvar. So similar is the carving of the *sikhara*, of base mouldings and the treatment of the niches, that at first glance at a photograph of the two, it is possible to confuse them. In fact it is only the damaged *sikhara* of the Sisiresvar that helps to distinguish the two shrines and there is little doubt that the two temples were built at the same time. All three *parsva-devatas* are intact, and these niches have a projecting eave above them. Side niches contain depictions of various Saiva figures and of *kanyas*, and the band of lion and elephant blocks is seen below both the side and the *parsva-devata* niches. An unusual figure on the walls of the temple is that of a reclining woman, rare in Hindu icono-



God with consorts, Sisiresvar temple.

graphy. The only example of the theme in India is from Buddhist legend in the form of the dream of queen Maya, and its presence here has no easy explanation.

As in the Markandesvar temple the back walls of the rectangular *mukhasala* commence directly from the large projecting pillars flanking the shrine doorway. There are no interior pillars and none to make an antechamber either. There is a flat double roof with a clerestory between, but this is today in complete ruins. The edges of the upper roof slabs are decorated with bands of floral design and rows of pendants, while the edge of the lower slab is carved with scenes from the Ramayana and Mahabharata.

The *mukhasala* presents a contrast to that of the Markandesvar in its absence of windows and in its decorative scheme. The place of the central window is occupied by a large sculpture niche, and the carving of a smaller sculpture niche on either side results in a decorative scheme that is akin to that of the shrine walls, and is perhaps based on it. The main niche on the north wall contains an image of four-armed Lakulisa with his two inner hands in the gesture of preaching, his two outer hands holding an *akshamala* and a flower, and with his *lakuta* resting against his right shoulder. He sits cross-legged on a lotus seat and on the pedestal below is a central scroll, two damaged animals that could be deer and two male figures with a naga hood. On either side of him are three disciples, each with their own haloes, and it has been suggested that this particular image drew its inspiration from the Buddhist theme of the preaching Buddha.[10] The niche to the right

of Lakulisa contains a seated male with a naga hood behind his head, while on the left is a portly male figure with a pot-belly.

Panigrahi identifies the figures as the fifth Dhyani Buddha, Amoghasiddhi, who is often depicted with a seven-hooded snake behind him, and Jambhala, Buddhist god of riches, corresponding to the Hindu deity Kubera.[11] Thus it has been argued that the entire left wall of the Sisiresvar *mukhasala* is Buddhist in inspiration. At first sight it does not seem justified to see so many Buddhist sculptures on a patently Hindu temple. But we shall see shortly that the first phase of carving at the Buddhist monastery of Ratnagiri is to be placed contemporary with these Group B temples. In fact, so close is the similarity in the style of carving and in the decorative details between early Ratnagiri and the Sisiresvar temple, that it is our belief that the same school of artists worked on both. Under such circumstances, it is possible that these Buddhist-type carvings on the Sisiresvar temple owe their existence to the fact that they were the work of artists who had been working at Buddhist Ratnagiri, and who only marginally adapted their style when they turned to work on a Hindu temple. The niches on the *mukhasala* are bordered by elaborate floral scrolls and the mouldings below the *mukhasala* side niches include that row of little blocks carved as lions and elephants.

The doorway into the shrine is decorated with finely carved floral scrolls but is marked by the absence of the *graha* lintel. Beyond the four-armed *dvarapala* is a male figure with a naga hood, holding a *kalasa*. Decoration of the entablature includes all those motifs we have seen already in Group A temples and which remain the formulae throughout Group B.

Vaital Deul at Bhubanesvar. The Vaital *deul* at Bhubanesvar is our prime example of the early *khakhara* temple which the *Silpa Prakasa* labels the *vaitalika* variety and in which the shrine is rectangular in plan with the *sikhara* terminating as a barrel-vaulted structure. We have already seen this variety in the tiny Durga temple at Baidesvar belonging to Group A, and in the shrine in the middle of the courtyard walls of the Phase A *astaparivara* temple at Mukhalingam. But this is the first major example of the type. The *Silpa Prakasa* tells us specifically that this type of temple is for the worship of the Mothers and that it is a tantric shrine, and we find that the Vaital *deul* at Bhubanesvar is an almost exact copy of the textual description of a *vaitalika* temple.

The base mouldings of the Vaital shrine are of Category II and are treated



The reclining woman, Sisiresvar temple, a theme rare in Hindu iconography.

in a manner similar to that in the Markandesvar and Sisiresvar temples. Here the *parsva devata* niches do not interrupt the mouldings, but are placed above it with no separate base mouldings of their own. The back wall of the shrine, above the base mouldings, is divided into five sculptured niches, and the text names this the *vigraha bandha* or sculpture level. The central niche is occupied by Siva as Ardhanarisvar and shown with *urdhva linga*. The other four niches contain *kanyas*—two *dalamalikas* drawing down the branch of a tree, a *padmagandha* with flower in hand, and a *darpana* looking into a mirror.

A certain fluency of technique is apparent in the carving. Figures are posed in a naturalistic fashion and while the treatment of legs is still occasionally clumsy, the manner of handling arms and shoulders seems to have been mastered. The images display a gentle *dehancement*, and bodies are tall and slender with stomach muscles nicely emphasized. Each niche is flanked by pilasters decorated with *purnaghatas*, scrolls, large rosettes and half-lotuses and completed above as a barrel-vaulted shrine embellished with the familiar dotted double arch. Above this are rounded *purnaghatas*, on top of which are addorsed lions crouching above elephants.

The recessed *bandhana* along the back wall is peopled with figures, and



The striking Vaital temple at Bhubanesvar, constructed in the *khakhara* style.



Nataraja from the Vaital temple.

above this are several levels of horizontal mouldings, decorated with typical Formative Phase motifs. Beyond this is the head-portion of the roof which, in accordance with the instructions of the *Silpa Prakasa*, is built up of plain blocks of stone. The roof section is constructed in two levels, the lower being bordered with a frieze depicting a war procession. Then follows a recessed band filled in with *jali*-work, *mithunas*, and *ghatas*, above which is the final rounded roof topped with three *amalakas* and *kumbhas* at a height of 35 feet from the ground. On the back of the *sikhara* there is no *vajramastaka*, while the front *raha* contains a large and prominent arch with an image of Nataraja shown with *urdhva linga* in its upper circular portion, and the lower square section housing an image of Surya in his chariot, with Aruna driving the seven horses. The upper portions of the two side walls are also embellished with *vajramastakas* containing on one side Harihara with *urdhva linga*, and on the other Lakulisa, also with *urdhva linga*. The two side walls of the shrine are also divided into five vertical sculpture sections but here the central niches are larger and house images of Parvati and Mahisamardini. The smaller niches contain *mithuna* couples and *kanyas* and the side niches on the front wall of the shrine also house *kanyas*.

The rectangular *mukhasala* has four miniature shrines projected against its four corners, exactly as we saw in the Group A Madhukesvar temple at Mukhalingam. These miniature shrines are not of the *khakhara* type like the main shrine tower of the Vaital *deul*, but are of the standard *rathayukta* variety, and here, as at Mukhalingam, they add greatly to the aesthetic appeal of the structure. The base mouldings of these shrines and of the rest of the *mukhasala* are not of Category II that is used on the main shrine, but are of the earlier Category I. Complete competence is displayed in the joint between shrine and *mukhasala*, and a separate wall has been built to connect the two structures. The *mukhasala* has a flat double roof with a clerestory between the two levels. The central portion of the two side walls of the *mukhasala* is treated from top to bottom as a large plain square *jali* window. On either side are the markings for a side niche, with the upper portion roughly carved as a barrel-vaulted shrine, and the second level of the base moulding having been cut into little blocks all ready to be carved into elephants and lions. The carving of a central niche is also indicated on all four projected miniature shrines. Why the *mukhasala* walls were left thus apparently incomplete is quite inexplicable. The interior has no columns, but there are eight large pilasters against the side walls.

The shrine of the Vaital is unique among Orissan temples in being the *only* example of a shrine with images carved against its interior walls. Commencing from the inner left there is a group of Eight Mothers preceded by four-armed Virabhadra, depicted with *urdhva linga* and a large halo and seated in *lalitasana* with one foot resting on his bull Nandi. On the left wall of the shrine are graceful and slender seated images of Brahmi, Mahesvari, Kaumari, and Vaisnavi, each shown with her *vahana* and with tripods of offerings below her seat. Along the main wall we see Varahi in partly squatting position, holding a fish in one hand, followed by Aindri with her *vahana*, the elephant.

The main central image of the Vaital shrine is that of Chamunda standing





Two images of Siva Bhairava from inside the shrine of the Vaital temple.

on a corpse within a niche that is very much larger than the rest and has decorated mouldings above. She is today completely draped in saris and garlands but the potency, intensity, and might of the goddess makes itself felt in her huge gaping mouth and large eyes that have a silver inlay. To the right of Chamunda is an unidentified goddess seated in *lalitasana* with trident in one hand and a flower in the other, with the trident indicating her affiliation to Siva. Ganesa follows the series of Matrikas. The various images are flanked by the familiar pilaster decorated with *purnaghatas*, floral scrolls, and half-lotuses.

The remaining images in the shrine comprise a rather unusual grouping of gods, and two of them seem to indicate that the temple was associated with tantric practices that incorporated human sacrifice. The first figure on the right wall of the shrine is a fearsome, skeletal form of Bhairava, with skull-like head, hollow eyes, open mouth, prominent *urdhva linga*, and wearing a garland of severed human heads. He holds a skull-cap in one hand from which flames seem to be rising, and a *kartari* knife in the other, and lying beside him is a severed human head. Below is a tripod with two severed heads on it and to the right of this tripod is a jackal eating a corpse; the entire scene seems to indicate some connection with human sacrifice. Next to him is a pot-bellied Kubera-like image, and beyond is a figure of squatting Varaha with an axe in one hand and a bowl in the other. The next image depicts a god seated in *padmasana* with a seven-headed *naga* hood behind him and a *purnaghata* below his seat.

On the inner right wall of the shrine is another awe-inspiring form of Bhairava seated on a recumbent human body and portrayed as an emaciated

figure with skull-like head and prominent *urdhva linga*. In one hand he holds a trident with an impaled human on it. To the upper left of the image is a clear representation of an elephant with its legs hanging loosely, indicating a form of Siva as *gajasamharamurti* and below are jars and tripods of offerings. It seems apparent that some very unusual tantric rites were enacted in this temple.

The Vaital is a fine example of a temple belonging to Formative Phase B and to us it seems quite impossible that it could be placed prior to the Parasuramesvar as Fabri has so emphatically stated.[12] We do not find convincing any of the eleven points he has adduced to support his placing and it seems to us that even the single factor of the masterly joint between shrine and *mukhasala* is evidence of the Vaital displaying experience far in advance of the Parasuramesvar. The projection of the four miniature shrines against the four corners of the *mukhasala* is most elegantly achieved and we *cannot* see this temple as a precursor to the Parasuramesvar. There is, in addition, the more advanced sculptural style seen on the Vaital, with its relatively free and easy positioning of the human body. The Vaital is definitely a Phase B temple, perhaps one of the first of this advanced stage, and the combination of the earlier category I mouldings for the *mukhasala* with type II mouldings for the main shrine is perhaps indicative of such a placing within Group B.

Buddhist Monastery at Ratnagiri. Located on the top of the Ratnagiri hill along the middle reaches of the Virupa river, is an early Buddhist monastery which apparently acquired great renown and which continued in occupation for several centuries. The monastic complex includes a massive *stupa* on the peak of the hill, a number of smaller *stupas*, many hundred stone votive *stupas*, remains of a Buddhist temple, and more than one monastic building. We are here concentrating on the main monastery which contains within its brick-built shrine a large image of the Buddha flanked by the *bodhisattvas* Padmapani and Vajrapani, all three images having large haloes. The 12 foot high image of Buddha is carved from several large blocks of stone, and is seated under a tree in the *bhumi-sparsa mudra*. The base mouldings of the stone wall of the monastery belong to category II, and below some of the niches are seen the row of little blocks carved as elephants and lions that we find throughout the Formative Phase.

Among the many architectural fragments lying around are those which depict *jali*-work panels alternating with *ghatas* and dancing figures, and there are several fragments with *bhara-vahakas*. There is also a damaged panel depicting a *dvarapala* with his hair styled into a 'wig head-dress', while several male figures have their hair arranged in ringlets. Dotted arches were also part of the decorative scheme and we see portions of several, one of them containing a seated Buddha. These blocks must have formed part of the superstructure of this early monastery. Decorative details—rosettes, lotus petals, *purnaghatas*, scrolls, dots, gourd bands, *gelbai* and the undulating figuration of the half-lotus—are all typical of the Formative Phase.

It is particularly instructive to compare the carvings at Ratnagiri with those on the walls of the Sisiresvar *mukhasala* where Buddhist influence has been suggested. There is, for example, an image of Jhambala at Ratnagiri,

Surya from the Vaital temple.





The exquisitely carved entrance way into the Ratnagiri monastery.

and a similar image on the Sisiresvar *mukhasala* which has been identified as the same god. The carving and positioning of the images is similar, the pilasters flanking the niche are similar, and there is the same type of deeply sculpted *purnaghata* on the larger pilasters adjoining. Carved along the outer walls of the Ratnagiri monastery are small standing male figures with a naga hood behind them and holding a pot in their hands. They are reminiscent of similar figures on the doorway of the Sisiresvar shrine. It would seem that the main monastery at Ratnagiri was constructed at the same time as temples of Formative Phase B, such as the Markandesvar, Sisiresvar and the Vaital, and it would appear further that the same school of craftsmen responsible for these Hindu temples worked also on the Buddhist monastery.

Bhringesvar Temple at Bajrakot. The Bhringesvar temple stands today in a sadly ruined condition in the small town of Bajrakot, along the upper reaches of the Brahmani river. The *mukhasala* which must once have been a rectangular flat-roofed hall, has collapsed, completely, and today there is a thatched structure in front. Fortunately six of the original pillars have been rescued and placed within this. The shrine is intact but regrettably has been heavily plastered. However, the base mouldings of category II, the carving of the niches, and the treatment of the *sikhara* assign the temple to Formative Phase B. The *parsva-devatas* are seated Ganesa without his mouse, a pitifully plastered Kartikeya astride his peacock, and a much damaged Mahisamardini, and the pilasters flanking the niches are decorated with typical scrolls and *purnaghatas*. Side niches include abraded figures of Ardhanarisvar, Lakulisa with four disciples, the river goddesses, and a *mithuna* couple. The four corners of the shrine wall have pillars sculpted against them with an exquisite scroll decoration along the shaft and an intricately carved *purnaghata* as the base.

The doorway into the shrine is embellished with an enchanting *gelbai* motif which includes several lively acrobatic figures. Above the doorway is an *astagraha* lintel in familiar style, with tiny pilasters separating the eight seated *grahas*. Decorative motifs are those we are familiar with from Phase A temples and which continue throughout Phase B as well.



The heavily plastered Siva temple at Bajrakot. The *mukhasala* in front retains most of its original pillars over which a thatched roof has been built.

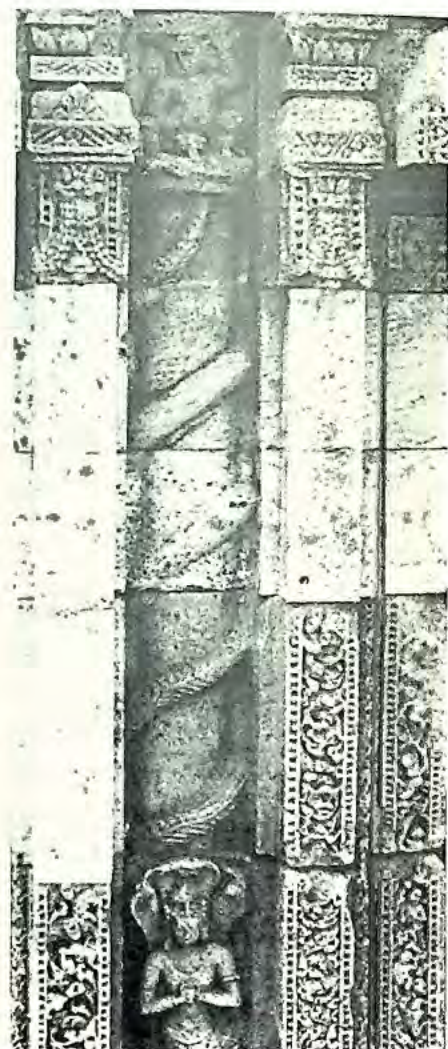
Singanath Temple in the Mahanadi. Built on a rocky island in the Mahanadi river, the Singanath temple may be approached by a fishing boat from the little village of Gopinathpur which is some 60 kilometres from Cuttack. The temple is a fascinating one, both architecturally and from the point of view of its unusual array of sculptural themes, but regrettably it is in a heavily plastered condition. The Singanath is the most advanced of our Formative Phase temples as far as the joint between shrine and *mukhasala* is concerned. From the exterior we see sculptured niches on the front wall of the shrine and similar niches on the back wall of the *mukhasala*, all containing images of gods. We now find in addition a sculptured niche on the wall that has been built to connect shrine and *mukhasala*, with Ganga in one niche and Yamuna in the other. This certainly constitutes an advance on most other temples of Group B (see frontispiece).

The *mukhasala* is rectangular, flat-roofed, and pillared. Originally there were twelve pillars within and twelve pilasters against the two side walls, but in recent years the pillars have been joined together in a clumsy fashion to form an interior partition of sorts. The roof is a triple rather than a double one, and

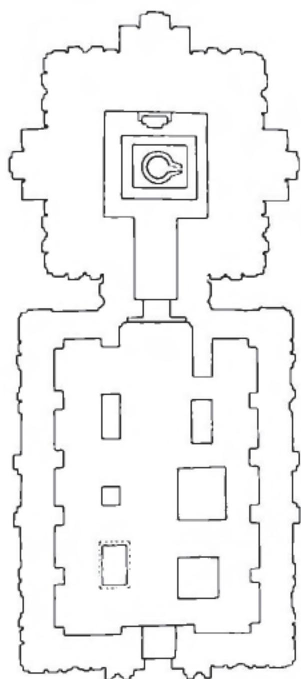
Left. Doorway decoration. *Centre.* Seven foot high bodhisattva Padmapani. *Right.* Naga pilasters belonging to Phase 2.







today there is no sign of any clerestory level between. Along the edges of the lower roof slab are vividly and powerfully portrayed scenes from the Ramayana.

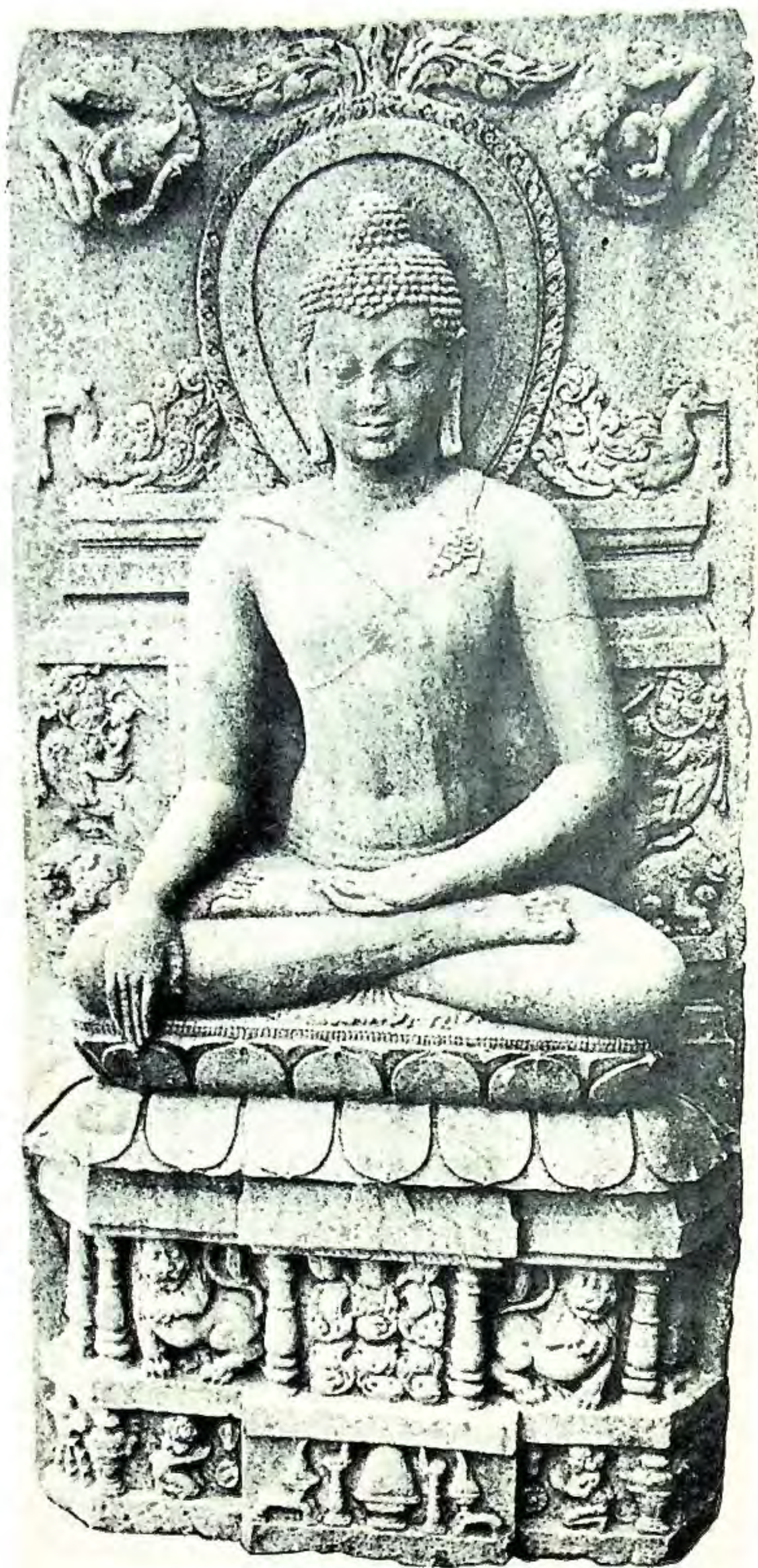


Plan of Singanath temple.

The entire scheme of decoration of the *mukhasala* walls is an organised one that speaks of a maturity not to be found in any temples of Group A. Six pilasters, decorated variously with scrolls, *gelbai*, *purnaghatas*, and either a *kanya* or *mithuna* couple, extend from roof to ground level and divide the wall into seven bays. The central bay is a grille window of a simple type with large square blocks decorated variously with *purnaghatas*, dwarfs and floral motifs, and with the horizontal bands between embellished with the triangular and undulating figuration of the half-lotus, with rosettes, lotus petals and *jharavali*. The bays on either side of the window are treated in a manner similar to the window, except that the spaces between are not cut through, but are left plain or carved with a shallow *jali* design. The bays flanking these semi-windows house the main sculptural niches and on the south wall we find Síva and Agni, with Varaha and Narasimha on the north wall. The two corner bays which are narrower also contain images of deities, and along the south side we see Krishna killing Kaliya and Lingodbhavamurti, while the opposite wall depicts Trivikrama and a damaged panel. Figures are gracefully poised, and it is unfortunate that their undoubtedly elegant outlines are hidden beneath the plaster.

The front east wall of the *mukhasala* has a central doorway flanked by niches containing the river goddesses. Beyond the door jambs which are decorated in familiar manner, are two broad bands carved with images of the *saptamatrikas*. On the left are Virabhadra, Mahesvari, Vaishnavi and Aindri, while on the right are Brahmi, Kaumari, Varahi with fish and bowl and a squatting skeletal Chamunda wearing a garland of skulls and seated on a recumbent male figure. Over the doorway into the shrine is a much plastered but still distinguishable *astagraha* lintel, carved in a familiar style. An intriguing feature about the carvings on the *mukhasala* is the portrayal of both Siva and Vishnu in various forms. The south wall depicts Krishna, Siva, Agni, and Lingodbhava, while the north wall is devoted entirely to various forms of Vishnu. A survey of themes reveals, in fact, more depictions of Vishnu than of Siva, which is unusual considering that the temple enshrines a linga.

The treatment of the *sikhara* is a familiar one. As is the case of other temples of Phase B, the front *raha* of the shrine projects considerably with a further projection for its *vajramastaka*. Looking more closely at the *vajramastaka* we find that only the upper circular portion of the dotted arch, containing the depiction of a many-armed dancing Siva, is to be seen above the roof of the *mukhasala*. The lower portion may be seen from within the *mukhasala*, high up above the shrine doorway, and it contains seated images of Siva and Parvati with a whole range of *gana* attendants below. It would appear that there was some sort of miscalculation in the height of the *mukhasala* roof since it was the standard practice for the entire *vajramastaka* of the front *raha* to be visible above this roof. When the shrine was being built, it is possible that the architects had not intended to construct a triple roof for this *mukhasala*, and with the subsequent addition of the third roof slab,



A Buddha, 5 feet high, from the main monastery at Ratnagiri.

the lower portion of the *vajramastaka* was hidden from view.

The *raha* on the left has a forceful image of Siva as Andhakasuravadha in the lower portion of the dotted *vajramastaka*, with the complete iconography of the god shown around him, while the dotted circle above depicts Yama, riding a buffalo and holding a *gada* and noose. The *raha* at the back contains Lakulisa seated on a lotus seat with a *yogapatta* around his knees and an umbrella above. His *lakuta* rests against his left shoulder, and on both sides of him, seated on tiny lotus seats of their own, are his four disciples. The *raha* on the right contains images of Parvati.

The shrine walls remain *triratha* in plan and are treated in a familiar manner. The main innovation is the appearance of tall, slender pilasters flanking the side niches, and extending right up to the level of the *bandhana*. The shafts of these pilasters are decorated with lotus petals, *purnaghatas*, scrolls, *kirtimukhas*, half-lotuses and a *kanya*. At their base we find that popular motif of the Formative Phase—three little blocks carved as lions and elephants. Above each of the niches is a projecting eave of the type we have seen already on the Sisiresvar shrine, and flanking the base of each niche is a small standing male figure with a naga hood behind him and holding a vase in his two hands: these are reminiscent of similar figures on the doorway of the Sisiresvar shrine and along the walls of the Ratnagiri monastery.

All niche images on the Singanath temple are carved from separate slabs of stone and inserted into prepared niches. On the left walls of the shrine, the side niches contain images of Ganesa and Kartikeya, causing us to wonder what figures could have been placed in the *parsva-devata* niches, since both these gods are standard *parsva-devata* images in a Siva temple. The image placed at the moment in the central niche does not belong to it and is too patently short and narrow for the niche. Other niche images include Ardhanarisvar, Harihara, Gangadhara Siva, and Ekapada, all shown with *urdhva linga*. The recessed *bandhana* is peopled with figures, and the mouldings on either side are typical of Formative Phase temples.

Head of Buddha from Ratnagiri.



Base mouldings of both shrine and *mukhasala* appear to be a variation on Category I mouldings. We describe them as a variation firstly because the mouldings are here in four rather than in three levels, and secondly because they follow the projections and recesses of the wall, an advanced feature that anticipates the practice of later temples. *Parsva-devata* niches project considerably and have their own set of mouldings somewhat akin to those seen on the Markandesvar and allied temples.

The *triratha* shrine, the *pancha ratha sikhara* treated exactly as other *sikharas* of Group A and B temples, the base mouldings that are a variation on category I, the rectangular flat-roofed *mukhasala*, and the decorative details, all indicate that the temple belongs to the Formative Phase. Two factors indicate its slightly advanced date within this phase. The first is the accomplished nature of the joint between shrine and *mukhasala* with sculptured niches on the connecting wall. The second is the fact that all sections, projections and recesses of the wall are carried down into the base mouldings. Quite intriguing is the miscalculation of heights resulting in the lower portion of the *vajramastaka* on the front *raha* being taken into the *mukhasala* and being lost in the darkness above the shrine doorway. If there had been a

simple double roof this would have been avoided, and it seems possible that this was the first time the architects were attempting a triple roof. Without much hesitation the Singanath temple may be placed late within Formative Phase B.

Siva Temple at Borogram. The Siva temple at Borogram, located along a tributary of the Rishikulya river, displays many similarities to the Singanath temple. It has a *triratha* wall with a familiar treatment of niches, and flanking the niches is a flat decorated pilaster rising out of a *purnaghata* and with scroll work adorning the shaft. It extends all the way up to the *bandhana* just as we saw at Singanath. Base mouldings are in four levels and are similar in treatment to those on the Singanath temple, where we considered them to be a variation of Category I. Kartikeya in his *parsva-devata* niche is seated astride his peacock with his hair in the *sikhandaka* style and with mongoose and snake below. There is a recessed *bandhana* with a whole series of animals carved within it, and at the corners are seated lions. The *pancharatha sikhara* is divided by *amalakis* into five units of three horizontal levels each. Decorative motifis are typical of the Formative Phase.

The base mouldings and the tall slender pilasters flanking the side niches, suggest for this temple a similar placing to that of the Singanath—late within Formative Phase B. However, the Borogram *mukhasala* built of plain undecorated blocks has, as it stands today, a *pidha* roof. If the *mukhasala* is the original and not a later addition as we have suggested in the case of the Amangai temple,[13] then we would instead, have to place the temple early in the Phase of Transition.

Manikesvar Temple at Suklesvar. At Suklesvar in the Cuttack district, a little distance from the Virupa river, standing in the midst of lush paddy fields and swaying palms, lie the remnants of the Manikesvar temple. It is unfor-



The recently reconstructed Manikesvar temple at Suklesvar.



Panel from Suklesvar depicting Krishna killing the serpent demon Kaliya, with the serpent queen standing behind Krishna.

tunately in a badly ruined condition, and both shrine and *mukhasala* stand *in situ* only up to the top of their base mouldings. This ruined state precludes complete certainty on the matter of its affiliation but the temple displays several features that persuade us to place it in Formative Phase B. Remains of four corner shrines indicate that the Suklesvar temple was of the *panchayatana* variety and it may possibly have been an *astaparivara* temple, since there seem to be the foundations of a few other shrines in the same general area. Further clearance and excavation would help to clarify the situation.

The shrine has base mouldings over six feet in height, and these are of category II that is typical of a Phase B temple. The *parsva-devata* niches project considerably and extend downward interrupting the level of the base mouldings. They are flanked by large pilasters embellished with exquisite scrolls and *purnaghatas*, and decoration of the niches include bands of scrolls, dots, the triangular figuration of the half-lotus, bands of lotus petals and a row of blocks transformed into lions and elephants. These little blocks, eight in number, are carved with the entire lion or elephant as in the Kualo temple rather than with just the forepart of the animal. Decorative details speak of affinity with Formative Phase temples. There are indications that the shrine wall was *pancharatha*, but we have no means of knowing how exactly its wall surfaces or its *sikhara* were treated. One *parsva-devata* niche contains a four-armed standing image of Parvati with lion to one side and antelope to the other. The second niche contains a standing god whom we would expect to identify as Kartikeya: however the god is shown with *urdhva linga*, and must instead be a form of Siva.

The *mukhasala* is in almost complete ruin and only a portion of the base remains. It is no longer a rectangular pillared structure, but is open and square and this factor is suggestive of a slightly later date for the temple. What little we can see of the base mouldings indicates that there was one continuous row of mouldings that were not sharply demarcated to follow the various recesses and projections of the wall, and this is an indication of the Formative Phase.

There are several hundred sculptured fragments lying around the site. Blocks carved with dotted arches topped with *kirtimukhas* are numerous,

housing variously images of Lakulisa, small seated figures, *trimurtis* or single heads. Several blocks are decorated with panels of *jali*-work alternating with couples and there are a few small figures of *kanyas*, mostly *dalamalikas*. Figures are flanked by pilasters with *purnaghatas*, and rows of rosettes and *haravali* are seen. There are also a large number of rectangular friezes of a narrative nature, depicting stories from mythology. We see Krishna killing Kaliya, several scenes from the Ramayana, and a number of other panels that are not so easy to identify. These must have been placed either along the *bandhana* of the shrine, or along the lower roof edge of a flat-roofed *mukhasala* as we saw in the Sisiresvar temple at Bhubanesvar and in the Singanath. Also lying around in the debris are blocks of stone cut into little squares and carved with figures of dancers and musicians. We assume that these were placed, perhaps on the *mukhasala*, in a position similar to that of the little blocks carved as elephants and lions. As far as base mouldings and decorative motifs are concerned, the temple seems to belong quite definitely to Formative Phase B. On the other hand, the square *mukhasala* and the *pancharatha* shrine base is indicative of a somewhat advanced stage, and on this basis we would suggest that the Suklesvar temple is perhaps one of the latest temples built during Formative Phase B.

Siva Temple at Mohanagiri. On the edge of a large tank near the Khadga river in interior Tosala is the completely renovated Siva temple at Mohanagiri. Fortunately the original pillars of the flat roofed *mukhasala* have been



The completely renovated and whitewashed Siva temple at Mohanagiri. Blocks belonging to the original construction lie all around.





Figures of dancers and musicians carved on tiny blocks from the temple at Suklesvar.

preserved and placed inside the newly built hall, and we find eight pillars and four pilasters as well as the beams that once rested above them. The lower half of the column is a plain square, while the upper portion is embellished with a large *ghata* with leaves overflowing at its four corners and with several round and many-sided mouldings below this. Blocks of stone from the original temple are lying around and fragments of decorative carving may be seen on them. Bands of scroll-work as well as *purnaghata* reliefs are discernible. On the basis of the very meagre evidence available, we would tentatively assign the temple to Formative Phase B.

6

Transitional Phase

In the nine temples and one Buddhist monastery which we have grouped together within the Transitional Phase, we find certain features of the Formative temples as also an anticipation of those which occur in the Culmination Phase. The Transitional Phase includes some temples with flat-roofed rectangular *mukhasalas*, some with *mukhasalas* which, though still pillared and rectangular, have already begun to display a trend towards the pyramidal roof, and one with a square *mukhasala*. The serpent pillar characteristic of the Culmination Phase sometimes appears flanking the doorway and the windows of the *mukhasala*, and occasionally also in the recesses of the shrine walls. Generally, early decorative motifs such as *purnaghatas*, *jharavali*, rosettes, and dotted arches fade into insignificance in the transitional temples. The base mouldings of most transitional temples clearly anticipate the next phase and, in particular, we see the appearance of the characteristic leaf-like strip connecting the various levels of mouldings. Only two of our ten transitional monuments retain the base mouldings of the Formative Phase.

It is obviously not possible to select a "typical" temple from the Transitional Phase, as such a phase by its very nature is a changing one, with each temple displaying a different combination of early and late features. In addition, some of our temples appear to exhibit local and regional peculiarities and it is the appearance of two or three characteristic features that have enabled us to assign them to the Transitional Phase. We shall therefore only attempt to point out the main features of a late transitional temple—one which belongs to a relatively advanced date within this phase.

The most striking difference from the Formative Phase is seen in the walls of the shrine which are no longer *triratha* but have become *pancharatha*. This, as we have earlier detailed,[1] comprises a central *raha* with a small *parsva-devata* niche; *konakas* treated as flat pilasters decorated in four levels; and *anarthas*, carved in a *rekha* shrine as small side niches, and in a *khakhara* shrine as flat pilasters. The recessed *anuraha* between each segment of the shrine wall is treated usually as a serpent pilaster, a feature which does not occur in the Formative Phase, while being standard in a Culmination temple. Another significant difference from the formative temples lies in the base mouldings which are of the new variety which we have labelled category III. Typical of these mouldings is the leaf-like strip that commences on the top-

most level, connects with the *kumbha*, and ends up at the top of the *chaitya* arch that decorates the *khura*.

The *mukhasala* of the transitional temple is generally rectangular and flat-roofed as in the Formative Phase, but doorways and windows are now flanked by serpent pillars which were unknown earlier. The walls of the *mukhasala* and of the shrine are decorated in similar fashion--a characteristic which clearly sets these temples apart from those of the Formative Phase and closer to those of the Culmination. Windows generally consist of a diamond-shaped grille, the imaginative figure compositions of the Formative Phase being absent. A significant difference in the shrine doorway is the occurrence of a *navagraha* lintel as against the earlier *astagraha* lintel. Images in the *parsva-devata* and other niches are invariably carved out of separate slabs of stone and inserted into prepared niches.

VARAHI TEMPLE AT CHAURASI

The Varahi temple, located in the midst of fields behind the little village of Chaurasi, is one of the most fascinating of early Orissan temples. It belongs clearly after the Formative Phase and exhibits all the features which we have

The Varahi temple at Chaurasi stands neglected in the midst of paddy fields. Note the elaborate carving of the walls of the shrine.

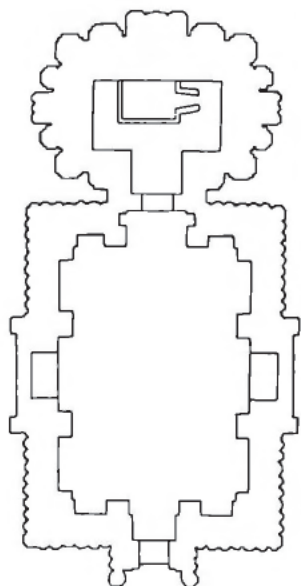


distinguished as characteristic of the Transitional Phase. It is unfortunate that the sandstone of which it is built is of such extraordinarily poor quality: most of the carving on the walls of the *mukhasala* is abraded and none of the figures retain any of their original crisp outlines. It is nevertheless a most valuable temple for us since it combines early and late features—an advanced shrine wall which could belong to the final phase with a rectangular flat-roofed *mukhasala* typical of the Formative Phase. Of even greater interest is the fact that the temple is such a close copy of the *Silpa Prakasa kamagarbha* temple. The author of the text tells us that he is a specialist in what he calls the *vimanamalini* or *kamagarbha* type of temple,[2] and his detailed description of such a temple, and how it should be constructed and decorated, tallies exactly with the Chaurasi temple.

The walls of the shrine are *pancharatha* and are carved as we have detailed in our description of the typical transition temple. The *konaka* and *anartha* pilasters are here decorated with a scroll, and all the six *konakas* as well as the two *anarthas* on the back wall are carved with an erotic panel above. J. N. Banerjea identifies the eight scenes we find here as depictions of the eight stages of ritual love-making, or *astha-kamakala-prayoga* as described



The sun god Surya seated in his chariot with the seven horses carved against the pedestal. Varahi temple at Chaurasi. *Right.* Plan of Varahi temple.



in the unpublished Oriya manuscript called the *Kaula Chudamani*. Banerjea points out that six of the eight scenes carved at Chaurasi correspond directly to six of the stages of the *Kaula Chudamani* manuscript.[3] It must be pointed out that the eight scenes associated with the eight stages of the text are not carved in the right order as we walk around the shrine. The fact, however, that there are only eight scenes depicted on the possible twelve places where they might have been carved, suggests that the sculptors were aware of the *ashta-kamakala-prayoga*.

In addition we find it possible to identify in one of the scenes (see p. 73) two monks, one of whom has a club against his shoulder, thus proclaiming his affiliation to the Kapalika sect. Both are participating in what appears to be a sexual initiation ceremony for newcomers to their fold, and it appears probable that the Varahi temple was associated with sexual rituals of the type known to have been propagated by the Kaula-Kapalika sects. It may be pointed out in this connection that the Somavamsi rulers of Orissa appear to have been followers of the Kaula cult. Certainly all the copper-plate charters of the Somavamsi kings commence with several verses praising the pursuit of love.[4]

The base mouldings of the Chaurasi temple belong to category III and while those of the shrine are of sub-type (b) as is laid down for a Devi temple, those of the *mukhasala* are of type (a). Two of the three *parsva-devatas*, Surya and Ganesa, are intact in their niches. This placing of deities is rather puzzling as it is contrary to the general practice in a Devi temple, and also contrary to the instructions of the *Silpa Prakasa* which specifies that a Devi shrine must have different forms of Devi in its *parsva-devata* niches. The only explanation we can offer is that Surya, as typifying the life-giving principle, may have been associated with Kaula-cult temples. This assumption gains some support from the fact that our only other tantric temple, the Vaital at Bhubanesvar, has a similar image of Surya placed prominently within the *vajramastaka* on the front *raha*.

The Chaurasi Surya is depicted as a gentle god seated on a lotus seat with legs crossed, yet wearing boots; he holds a full-blown lotus in both hands and has a large round halo. His charioteer Aruna is seated in front, holding the reins of the seven horses carved against the pedestal. The image has been carved out of a separate slab of stone and inserted into the prepared niche as is the general practice in Transition Phase temples. The standing Ganesa too is a highly accomplished piece of carving. Within the shrine is a magnificent portly image of Varahi, seated in *lalitasana* on a pedestal against which her buffalo is carved. She is large-breasted, pot-bellied, and her face is that of a boar, with hair that stands out all around in tight curls. She holds a fish in one hand and a bowl in the other.

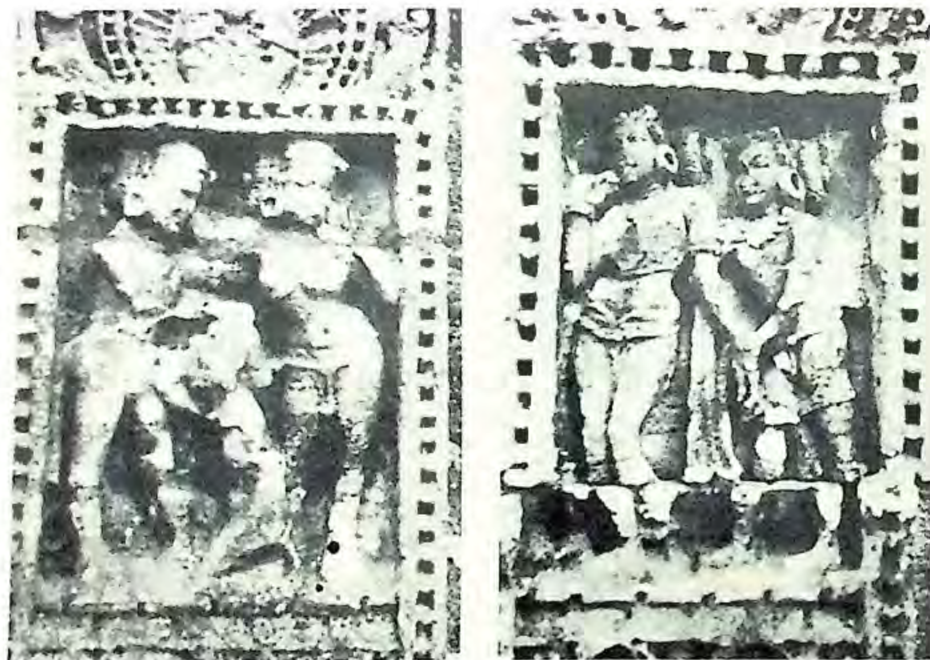
The *sikhara* of the Chaurasi shrine is of the barrel-vaulted variety we have seen already in the Formative Phase Vaital temple at Bhubanesvar, but here it has a richer, more baroque appearance characteristic of the Transition period. The *raha* of the *sikhara* has two sets of *vajramastakas*, as against the earlier practice of a single one, and as laid down in the *Silpa Prakasa*, the *raha* is carved in 16 horizontal levels with the lower *vajramastaka* commencing at the 6th level and the upper one at the 13th level. The shrine and

mukhasala at Chaurasi stand together on a common base which is in two levels and which follows the basic shape of the ground plan; the joint between the two structures is efficiently executed.

The Chaurasi *mukhasala* is rectangular and unpillared and has a flat double roof. This roof is our only surviving example of a profusely decorated flat roof, and it is adorned exactly as laid down in the *Silpa Prakasa*. The band forming the lowest level of the roof is carved with figures of nobility and an army (the *rajabandha* of the text), and above this is the sloping lower roof slab. Then comes the 'clerestory' which is carved with alternating *kumbhas* and *mithunas*.[5] Above this is another narrower *rajabandha*, and both these bands have an edging of *jharavali*. The walls of the *mukhasala* are treated in a manner somewhat similar to the walls of the shrine, and in this practice the temple clearly presages the accepted convention of temples of the Culmination Phase.

At Chaurasi there is a diamond grille window in the centre of the *mukhasala* wall, two *konakas* carved as decorative pilasters, and three sets of *anarthas* on either side of the window. Flanking the two windows and the single doorway into the *mukhasala* are massive naga pillars. Most of the decorative features of the Formative Phase are absent at Chaurasi: there are no dotted arches, no bands of rosettes, no lotus petals. However, *jali* work and rows of rather flat pendants are still to be seen, though these are overshadowed by narrow bands of scrolls of different types.

The Varahi temple is typical of the advanced Transition Phase and displays a number of features that show a logical progression towards the Culmination. It is in the plan and the roof of the *mukhasala* that the major change is yet to come.



Two of a series of eight erotic scenes on the shrine walls of the Varahi temple.

GANDHARADI TWIN TEMPLE

Built originally on the banks of the Mahanadi river, some 14 kms from the town of Baudh, but located today some distance away from the altered course of the river, are the twin temples at Gandharadi, one of Nilamadhav dedicated to Vishnu and the other of Siddhesvar dedicated to Siva. The temples are unique in presenting us with two identical temples built side by side on a common raised plinth. They are built of sandstone of a very poor quality and the surface carving is in a highly abraded condition. The crowning *chakra* of the Nilamadhav temple and the crowning linga on top of the Siddhesvar are carved of fine-grained chlorite. Siva temples are normally crowned with a trident, and as far as we are aware, this appears to be the only example in India of a crowning linga.

The shrine walls of the twin temples are treated in familiar *pancharatha* fashion, but the naga pillar is not to be seen in the *anurahas*, their place being taken by flat decorated pilasters. There is a plain recessed *bandhana*, above which the *rekha sikhara* is also *pancharatha*. The *konaka* of the *sikhara* is now divided into seven levels of three sections each, two levels more than was seen throughout the Formative Phase. The *anartha* and *raha* of the *sikhara* have a square trellis-like decoration. Base mouldings are of category III as at Chaurasi, with the leaf-like strip connecting the three levels.

Each of the temples has a rectangular *mukhasala* with a two-tiered flat roof, but there is no open clerestory or air-passage between the two roofs. Faint traces remain along the floor and ceiling of the one-time existence of pillars and Banerjea confirms that there were four pillars within the *mukhasala*.[6] The architectural organisation of the *mukhasala* is identical to what we have seen at Chaurasi with a central diamond-grille window, corner *konakas*, three *anarthas* on either side of the window and *anurahas* between. This similar treatment of walls of *mukhasala* and shrine is a definite indication of the temple having advanced beyond the Formative Phase. Flanking the windows and the door are the naga pillars which are typical of the Transition Phase.

An unusual feature of these temples is that they are placed on an elevated plinth which is itself decorated in a manner similar to that of the main temples. There are *anarthas* and *anurahas* of the type seen on the *mukhasala*, placed above identical base mouldings. Banerjea, writing in 1929, tells us that there were foundations of smaller temples upon the platform,[7] but unfortunately these are no longer in evidence nor is there any sign of the collection of the loose and broken images of Durga, Vamana, Matsya, Kurma and Varaha that he mentions. The only images intact are two large standing images of Vishnu, carved of fine-grained chlorite and placed inside the Nilamadhav temple, one within the shrine and one in a corner of the *mukhasala*. Vishnu is depicted with four arms and has a standing female figure on each side of him.

Fabri suggests that these twin temples are of an early date, and comparing them with the Parasuramesvar and the Singanath he says, "The obvious conclusion is that the Nilamadhav and the Siddhesvar temples of Gandharadi belong to the same period, the same architectural point of development, the same century."[8] Since we have no way of gauging the speed of development, it is *just possible* that they *may* all belong to the same century. They

certainly do *not* belong to the same point of development architecturally, and the *only* early feature reminiscent of the Formative Phase is the flat roof of the *mukhasala*. The treatment of the walls of the shrine and of the *mukhasala*, the late variety of base mouldings (category III), the naga pillars flanking the windows and doorway of the *mukhasala*, and the absence of early decorative motifs, indicate undoubtedly that the temples belong to the Transition Phase, the connection being with Chaurasi and not with any temple of the Formative Phase.

TIRTHESVAR AT BHUBANESVAR

The Tirthesvar temple at Bhubanesvar stands today as an abandoned shrine some distance to the left of the Bindu Sarovar tank. The temple implicitly follows the instructions laid down in the *Silpa Prakasa* for the construction and decoration of a *padmagarbha* type of *rekha* temple, and the shrine walls are treated in a manner showing all the characteristics of the typical Transition Phase temple. Attracting immediate attention are some exquisitely carved nagini pilasters.

The totally undecorated *konakas* and *anarthas* of the *sikhara* of the Tirthesvar are exactly in accordance with the instructions laid down for the construction of a *padmagarbha* shrine. The front *raha* is decorated with a simple *vajramastaka* containing the image of the dancing Siva, with a standard crow-



The unique twin temples at Gandharadi, one dedicated to Siva and the other to Vishnu.

ning *kirtimukha*. Above the shrine doorway is a complete *navagraha* lintel (formed with Ketu as the ninth *graha*) which, making its first appearance here, becomes a standard feature of the Culmination temples. The *mukhasala* in front has fallen away completely, but the connecting wall may be just discerned. We do not know if this hall was a flat-roofed one, or whether we have moved one stage ahead to the *pidha* type of roof.

The Tirthesvar temple clearly anticipates the Muktesvar, our finest Culmination temple, in the treatment of shrine walls. The undecorated *sikhara* seems to be a somewhat earlier feature which was abandoned by the time the Muktesvar was built.

BUDDHIST MONASTERY AT RATNAGIRI: SECOND PHASE

We saw in a previous chapter that the Ratnagiri monastery was built during Phase B of the Formative Period.[9] Base mouldings, decorative motifs and sculptural style revealed close affinities with the Markandesvar, Sisiresvar and Vaital temples at Bhubanesvar. The second phase of construction at Ratnagiri belongs to the Transition Phase and at this time a whole series of stone-fronted cells were added to the monastery. The base mouldings of the cells have a leaf-like strip down them which is typical of category III mouldings. Between the doorways are descending naga pilasters characteristic of the Transition Phase, and above the pilaster is a *bhara-vahaka*. The doorways are decorated with *gelbai*, gourd bands, scrolls and *kirtimukhas*. The top of the cells end up as barrel-vaulted shrines decorated with a *vajramastaka* flanked by lions. The decoration of the cells includes various narrow bands of scrolls and the general effect is of close affinity to temples of the Transitional Phase.

PATALESVAR AT PAIKAPADA

The Patalesvar temple group, located in a deserted glen near the village of Paikapada, is of the *astaparivara* variety. On three sides it is enclosed within courtyard walls, while on the west it is built into the hillside itself. There are two entrances into the courtyard, the main barrel-vaulted entrance to the east, and a small one to the north. Within the enclosure are four corner shrines with lingas, two more linga shrines facing the main temple, and a *saptamatrika* shrine to the north.

The *mukhasala* of the Patalesvar temple is a rectangular one containing twelve plain pillars. The roof, however, is a clearly transitional feature belonging between the early flat roof and the later pyramidal variety. It consists of six receding *pidhas* (tiers), culminating in a flat surface rather than reaching a pyramidal apex which is normally associated with *pidha* roofs. The projections over the two doorways and the one grille window have three *pidhas* above them crowned with a crouching lion. The main doorway in the front wall of the *mukhasala* has, in addition, an *amalaka*.

The exterior walls of the temple have been thickly plastered and whitewashed, but it is still possible to see that the base mouldings are in three levels and belong to category III. The decorative carving discernible under the plaster reveals the triangular figuration of the half-lotus and rows of dots. One loose fragment depicts a *torana kanya* leaning against a door. The

undecorated niches all along the walls of the *mukhasala* contain various images of Siva, all with *urdhva linga*—Ekapada, Gangadhara, Nataraja, Andhakasuravadha and Harihara.

The main shrine does not have the standard type of *sikhara*, but displays instead three *pidhas* that culminate at a height not much above the *mukhasala* roof in an *amalaka* at the centre and lions at the four corners. This variation in the shrine tower is perhaps due to the nature of the deity: Patalesvar means Lord of the Patala or underworld, and the god at Paikapada is to be found deep within the massive boulder of rock into which the shrine chamber is excavated. One corner of the *mukhasala* too is partly cut into the hillside. The four corner shrines reveal, however, that the standard type of *sikhara* was in use in this area too. These corner shrines are *triratha* with a central *parsva-devata* niche and side niches treated as barrel-vaulted shrines. Base mouldings are of category III. The *pancharatha sikhara*, which rests above a plain recessed *bandhana*, is in five levels of three sections each.



The *khakhara* gateway leading into the compound of the Patalesvar temple at Paikapada.

The *saptamatrika* shrine, a rectangular structure similar to the corner shrines, encloses elegantly proportioned images of the seven goddesses flanked by Virabhadra and Ganesa. The images, carved from separate slabs of stone, are heavily encrusted indicating that they have been subjected to a regular seepage of water. With the exception of Chamunda, all the Mothers have a child on their left knee and are seated in *lalitasana* on tripod-legged seats against which their *vahanas* are clearly depicted, while Chamunda is shown half-squatting upon a human corpse. The main *khakhara* gateway is a rectangular *triratha* structure with a central *raha* projection. The barrel-vaulted roof built of plain undecorated blocks is in two levels and is crowned with three *amalakis*.

The irregular placing of the two doorways and one window of the Patalesvar *mukhasala* is a feature reminiscent of the Formative Phase, as is also the carving of the window as a grille of intersecting circles. The temple, however, displays certain unusual features, most important among which is the strange character of the *sikhara* of the main shrine. This, as we have suggested, is probably due to the special character of the deity, resulting in the shrine having been excavated into the hillside. As the rock boulder itself forms the walls of the shrine, evidence of the existence of serpent pilasters is lacking. The *mukhasala* is carved with a series of unadorned niches containing various deities. The *mukhasala* roof however, which combines six *pidhas* with an ultimate flat surface, is clearly a Transitional feature. This, together with base mouldings of category III, suggests clearly to us that this *astaparivara* temple belongs to the Transitional Phase.

DIBBHESVAR TEMPLE AT SARAPALLI

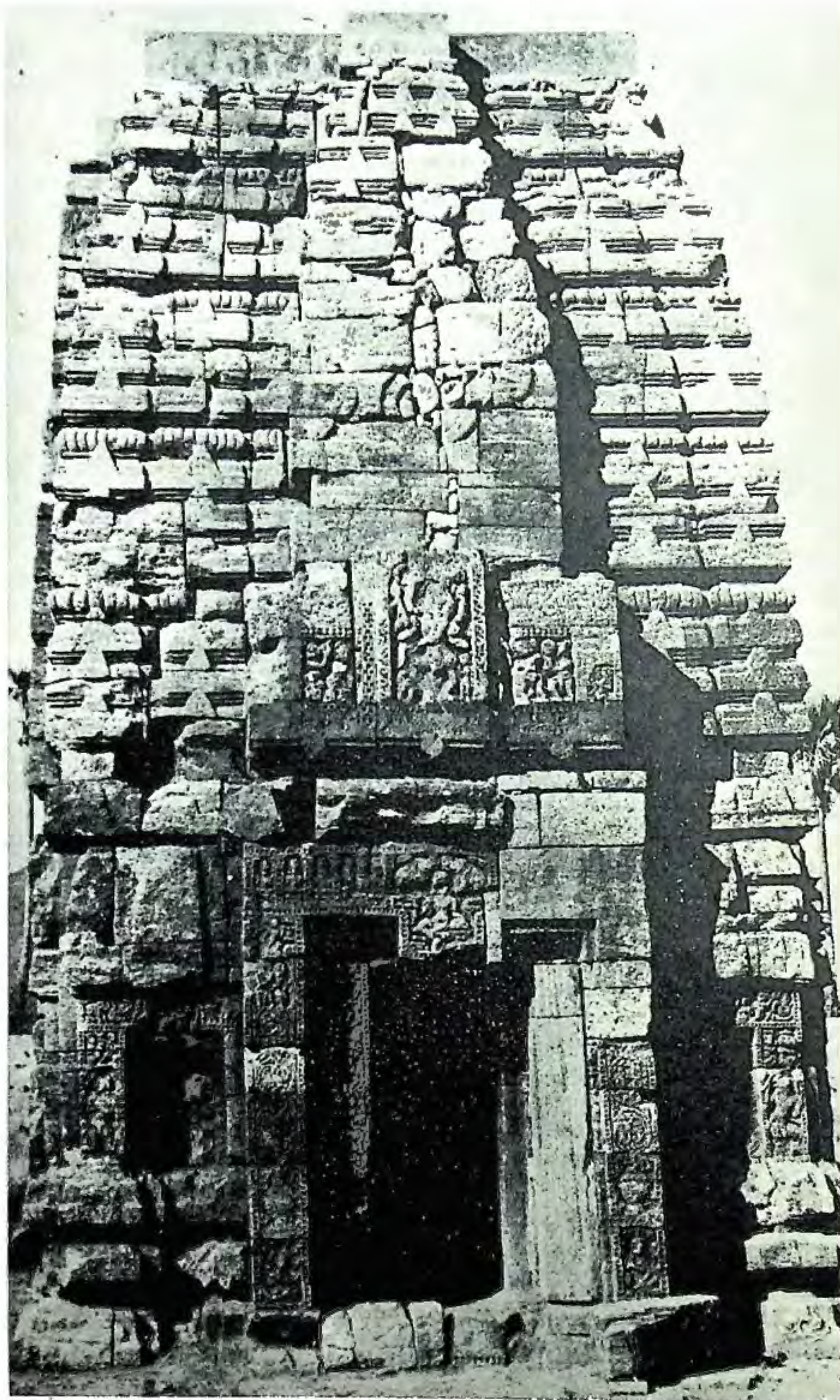
The Sarapalli temple in the Vizianagaram district of north Andhra appears to be the southernmost example of the Orissan temple. Today it stands in the midst of the wilderness as a shrine alone, with the river having moved a mile or so away. In the days past, Sarapalli seems to have been an important centre, and a copper-plate charter of the Mathara ruler Nandaprabhanjavarman was issued from this town.[10]

Base mouldings of the shrine are in three levels and belong to our earliest category I. The wall is *triratha* with a central *parsva-devata* niche that projects mildly, with the top of the side niches completed as barrel-vaulted shrines. The *parsva-devatas* are Ganesa, Kartikeya and Mahisamardini, and the side niches contain various gods including a number of Siva figures all shown with *urdhva linga*. A local peculiarity seems to be the treatment of the top of these niches which are sculpted with scenes from mythology. Flanking pilasters, elsewhere decorated with *purnaghatas* and floral motifs, also contain narrative figures. This is an unusual practice not found in any of our other Orissan temples. Each of these narrative panels is enclosed within dotted outlines, and the triangular figuration of the half-lotus is also to be seen.

Grille window of the Patalesvar temple.



The *sikhara* appears to have been in five levels of three sections each, but the uppermost level is today broken. In place of the usual *vajramastaka* found throughout Orissa decorating the front *raha*, we find here a rectangular panel containing the image of a dancing Siva. The doorway is decorated



The shrine of the isolated Siva temple at Sarapalli, which, though it lies today in Andhra Pradesh, shows clear affinities with the Orissan temple.

with a band of *gelbai* and with a scroll rising out of a *kumbha* (which is not the typical *purnaghata*) with a naga figure at the base. The lintel has the remains of a *navagraha* slab, judging from the placing of the five intact figures.

The base mouldings of category I and the *triratha* wall of the shrine are early features reminiscent of the Formative Phase. The decorative treatment of the temple, however, gives the general impression of a later period, which, combined with the appearance of the *navagraha* lintel, inclines us to place the shrine early in the Transitional Phase.

MALLIKESVAR TEMPLE AT JOGOMUNDA

The Mallikesvar temple at the foot of Jogomunda hill has the remains of a rectangular, flat-roofed, pillared *mukhasala* that is suggestive of a relatively early date for the temple. The roof of the *mukhasala* is much damaged, but it appears to have been in three levels as in the Singanath temple of the Formative Phase[11] and this is more clearly seen from within the hall. We see that here too, as in the Singanath, a portion of the decorative *vajramastaka* on the front *raha* has been taken into the *mukhasala*. High above the shrine doorway is the image of a dancing Siva that should have appeared on the exterior of the temple. The *mukhasala* wall has three levels of mouldings that belong to category I. The wall is so completely in ruins that we are quite uncertain as to where the openings were located or how the wall surfaces were treated. However, enough remains to reveal that the joint between shrine and *mukhasala* was competently handled. Among the fragmentary remains is an image of Siva Ekapada shown with *urdhva linga*, and there is also a fragment of a *saptamatrika* slab.

The walls of the shrine are basically *triratha* with a central *parsva-devata*



The Mallikesvar temple at the foot of the Jogomunda hill.

niche and side niches treated as barrel-vaulted shrines. On either side of these niches, and somewhat in the manner of the Singanath and Borogram temples, we find flat, tall pilasters that are here undecorated. The pilasters at the corners of the shrine walls are fluted, and this fluting, together with all the other recesses and projections of the wall are carried down into the base mouldings. These mouldings are in three levels and while they are similar to category III, the leaf-like strip that connects the various levels is absent. The *parsvadevatas* are Ganesa with his mouse, Kartikeya with cock and peacock, and Mahisamardini.

Right. Pillar figures from the temple at Rajim, Madhya Pradesh, the style of which appears to have influenced the sculpture of the Baidyanath temple. *Below. Mithuna* from Kosalesvar temple.

The *pancharatha sikhara* has seven levels of three sections each, which is what we have seen to be the practice on the Gandharadi twin temples. The *anarthas* of the *sikhara* have a tracery of *chaitya* arches that seems to anticipate the Culmination temples. With its combination of earlier and later features, we would incline to place this temple early in the Transitional Phase.

KOSALESVAR AT BAIDYANATH AND SIVA TEMPLE AT CHARDA

Situated on the banks of the Tel river some 15 kms from the town of Sonepur, is the Kosalesvar temple. It stands today as a *mukhasala* alone and is unusual in its plan, in its architectural features, and in its sculptural decoration. The structure is built mostly of stone but has brick filling in interstices which in itself is an unusual feature not found in the standard Orissan temple. In plan it is square with projecting raised porches on two sides. On a slightly raised platform in the centre of the hall are four tall pillars rising out of a *purnaghata*. The shaft is decorated with *kirtimukhas* holding strings of beads and the abacus block is decorated likewise.



What little remains intact of the outer wall of the *mandapa* reveals a division into two sculptural levels, upper and lower, each with its own set of niches. This is a very late feature indeed, to be found only in the later mature Orissan temples that follow after our Culmination Phase. The *anarthas* are treated as niches in both levels and between them are *anurahas* occupied by serpent pilasters. These are in entirely reptile form with single hoods, and extend all the way up the wall. The *Silpa Prakasa* text mentions that snake pilasters may occasionally be carved in such fully reptile form, but this is our only example of such a pilaster. These serpent pilasters clearly assign the temple to the Transition Phase. A striking feature of the decoration of the shrine doorway is a series of knotted snakes, completely entwined, and making their way up the jamb and along the lintel. Despite the fact that the *Silpa Prakasa* suggests this motif for door-jamb decoration, knotted snakes are unknown elsewhere in early Orissa.

Yet another feature unknown elsewhere in Orissa is the carving of large images against the pillars and pilasters of this temple. We see a whole series of exquisite sculptures, mostly of beautiful *kanyas* with attendants. There are *darpanas*, *dalamalikas*, *matrikas*, and some beautiful *mithunas*. All are carved sensitively and display delicate figure modelling. Many of the figures, though unassociated with divinity, have haloes which are often carved with rays within a beaded circle. Also unusual are the semi-circular medal-

lions placed almost like an umbrella above each pilaster figure, these being rounded above, with the lower inner section carved to depict a *gandharva* couple contained within a beaded and flowered border. It appears that the pilasters flanking the main entrance way were carved with the now damaged figures of Kartikeya and Ganesa, and other pilaster images include a dancing Siva and an Ardhanarisvara.

The only other temple akin to the Kosalesvar that is known to us is at Charda, some 35 kms north of Sonepur. Today, the temple at Charda is completely renovated—tiled, plastered, cemented and painted—but the plinth of the now non-existent side porches may still be identified. The exterior wall at Charda is *pancharatha* and also divided into upper and lower sculptural levels, and the base mouldings display a strip connecting their three levels. Here too the decoration of the shrine doorway includes knotted snakes. The four pillars in the centre of the *mandapa* are almost identical to those of the Kosalesvar if one can forget the blues, greens, reds and yellows with which everything has been liberally sprayed. One can identify a few *kanya* figures and a beautiful original Nataraja image: all other pillar figures have suffered from a heavy coat of plaster and paint. Belkhandi, in the the same area of interior Orissa, is the only other site remotely resembling the Kosalesvar.

The Kosalesvar temple, together with Charda and Belkhandi, seems to represent a regional style in interior Orissa. At Rajim near Raipur—the area







Flying *gandharva* couple on the underside of the *chatra* above the pillar figures in the Baidyanath temple.

that was the original homeland of the Somavamsi rulers—we find temples in which pillars regularly have figures carved against them, where ray haloes are common, and in which knotted snakes decorating a doorway is a common occurrence. We have seen earlier that there was a definite movement of the Somavamsi rulers from the Raipur area of ancient Kosala to the Sonepur area of Orissa, and artistic influence too might have travelled along this route. The idea of serpent pilasters in *anurahas*, however, must have come from the Orissan temples of the Transitional Phase. Base mouldings remind one of Gandharadi, while the existence of upper and lower sculptural levels on the outer wall of the Kosalesvar is a certain indication of a date possibly even later than the Transition period.

We then find ourselves unable to agree with Fabri's date of the sixth century for the Kosalesvar temple.[12] Nor can we agree with his suggestion that the original brick structure with four pillars in the centre was Buddhist work of the fifth century, taken over in the sixth century by the Hindus who added the two side porches and all the sculptured pillar images. The exterior wall, which Fabri considers part of this original Buddhist structure, is to us an indication of its much later date. This wall with its niches in two levels and its serpent pilasters in the *anurahas* could not belong to a date earlier than the Transition Phase. The combination of influences in interior Orissa from both the Rajim area of Kosala and from the main coastal regions of Orissa could not have occurred early, and we would have little hesitation in assigning the temple to an advanced date within the Phase of Transition.

SOMESVAR TEMPLE AT RANIPUR-JHARIAL

On the banks of the Somatirtha tank at Ranipur-Jharial stands the Somesvar temple built entirely of plain undecorated blocks of stone. Both wall and *sikhara* of the shrine are *triratha*. The square *mukhasala* is flat-roofed and pillared. It is difficult to be categorical about the exact placing of this quite undecorated temple. On the whole, we are inclined to place undecorated examples to a late date, and this, combined with the square *mukhasala*, the unusual projecting windows and the strip down the base mouldings of the portico pillars, suggests to us that the temple is probably to be assigned to the Transition Phase.

7

Culmination Phase

A painting, a lyric, a piece of music, a temple, all exist in nascent form in the artist's mind. The Orissan temples too arose as a basic concept in the imagination of the sculptor, who first envisaged only a *sikhara* above the shrine of the deity, with a flat-roofed hall in front as a concession to the worshipper. The sculptor added a figure here, a scroll there, an arch or a carved pilaster elsewhere until he finally embellished it into the model of perfection which is the exquisitely carved Muktesvar temple at Bhubanesvar. The treatment of the shrine walls and of the *sikhara* in our Culmination Phase is doubtless but an elaboration and a refinement of what we see in the advanced temples of the Transitional Phase. Such, however, is the degree of this refinement and its rarity of finish that it is difficult to convey the total impression of beauty created by its impact. Each little pilaster that flanks a side niche is carved with the same meticulous care and attention that is lavished on the main *konaka* pilaster. Every pearl issuing out of the mouth of a *kirtimukha* is rounded to perfection. Not a single leaf or stem that twists and curves in a band of scroll—and there are bands and bands of scrolls—lacks the sculptor's finishing touch. The total effect is overwhelming. With the Muktesvar it is almost as if the sculptors felt that they could not surpass what had been achieved in this style of temple. In later Orissan temple architecture, which is beyond the scope of our book, it seems that the sculptors attempted to excel by constructing the temple in two sculptural levels and thus raising its entire height.

Our Culmination Phase includes five sets of temples—the Muktesvar and Gauri temples at Bhubanesvar, a *panchayatana* temple at Ganesvarpur in north Tosala, three unusual shrines at Baudh in interior Tosala, and the remains of more than one temple at Khiching in Utkala.

MUKTESVAR AT BHUBANESVAR

Early Orissan architecture reached its peak in the exquisite little Muktesvar temple located at the edge of a tank at Bhubanesvar. Long years of architectural and sculptural experience here crystallized into faultless shape and dimensions, and as though this were not enough the sculptors decided to add a beautiful carved *torana* gateway and a low sculptured decorative wall enclosing the temple.

The walls of the shrine are divided into five segments and treated in the

manner we saw in some Transition Phase temples, but there is now a complete confidence in the handling of the theme. The *konaka* is a pilaster embellished with a *kanya* with the scroll behind her, a *kirtimukha* garland above, and the *bhara-vahaka* on top. The *anarthas* contain the side niches flanked by pilasters embellished with scroll and *kirtimukha* garland. These niches are finished as shrines with *pidha* roofs which are decorated with the same tracery of arches that now appears on the main *sikhara*. The *parsva-devata* niches project considerably and the large pilasters flanking them are carved on two sides exactly like the *konaka* pilaster, complete with *kanya*, scroll, and *kirtimukha* garland. There is an *anuraha* between the *konaka* and *anartha* only and this is treated as a descending naga pillar that rests on a base carved with two lions crouching on two elephants.

Base mouldings are of category III which we have already encountered on several temples of the Transition Phase, with the leaf-like strip connecting the three levels and culminating at the top of the *chaitya* arch decorating the *khura*. The Muktesvar *mukhasala* is square in plan and unpillared, but there are flat pilasters against the side walls, decorated with *kirtimukhas* holding long strings of beads. The roof is pyramidal and consists of an uninterrupted series of twelve *pidhas* with a *kalasa* at the apex. Lions are perched above the projections over door and windows and this remains a



The Muktesvar temple at Bhubanesvar located on the edge of an artificial tank. *Right*. An elegant naga image from the temple.



standard feature in the later mature Orissan temple. There is a semi-circular moonstep at the entrance and the shrine doorway has a *navagraha* lintel above. A unique feature of the *mukhasala* is the decorated ceiling, which is carved as a lotus with eight petals, within which are placed Virabhadra and the *saptamatrikas*. The goddesses are seated in *lalitasana* with a child on their knees, except for squatting Chamunda who holds a severed human head in one hand. At the two ends of this circle, one towards the shrine and the other towards the entrance, are rectangular panels. In one such panel is a seated image of Kartikeya with peacock, cock and attendants. In the other is an eight-armed dancing Ganesa, with a snake held above his head, and his mouse to the front. Two seated musicians are shown, one with drums and the other with cymbals, and two dancing *gana* attendants are also seen. The four corners of the ceiling are filled in with figures of dancers and worshippers.

The walls of the *mukhasala* are now treated in identical manner to that of the shrine except that there are additional *anarthas* and *anurahas*, and the grille window occupies the central *raha*. This similar treatment of *mukhasala* and shrine walls which is established in our Culmination Phase, remains the accepted formula in the later mature Orissan temples. The figure sculptures on the wall of the Muktesvar have acquired a refinement and delicacy not seen before and the expressive carving of the *kanyas* and of nagas and nagins is most striking. Among the *kanyas* are many *dalamalikas*, *toranas*, and *darpanas* and several girls with musical instruments. The sculptor has displayed considerable mastery in his knowledge of the flexibility of the female form and he has captured exquisite facial expressions. Hair styles and jewellery are carved with great attention to detail, and clothing, as always, is transparent. Nagas and naginis are superbly depicted. More than one nagini holds a conch in one hand and a flower in the other, and several nagas hold garlands.

The Muktesvar *sikhara* is embellished with a tracery of *chaitya* arches and this feature is one of the hallmarks of our Culmination Phase temples. The *konaka* of the *sikhara* is divided into five horizontal units of three levels each, just as we saw during the Formative Phase. The *anarthas* and the *raha* are decorated with the typical delicate inter-twined arches. The *vajramastakas* that earlier decorated the *rahas* of the *sikhara* have been transformed here into the *bho* arch which appears prominently on all four *rahas*. This bold and striking *bho* motif consists of a large elaborate arch, leaning against which are grimacing dwarf *yakshas* with hair in tight curls. The *bho* arch, which makes its first appearance in our Culmination temples, becomes a standard feature of the later mature Orissan temple. It is surprising that the *bho* is unknown to the author of the *Silpa Prakasa* who describes ordinary *vajramastakas*, but not those of this specific variety. One is tempted to conclude that the text was composed prior to the temples of our Culmination Phase. Above the Muktesvar *bho* and against the backdrop of the tracery of arches, the *raha* is further embellished with a small image of dancing Siva, and on the front *raha* we find also a lion seated above the *bho* and looking out over the pyramidal *mukhasala* roof. In the later mature Orissan temples the *bho* with the lion is found on all the four *rahas*.

In front of the temple is an elegant *torana*, the base of which is a square

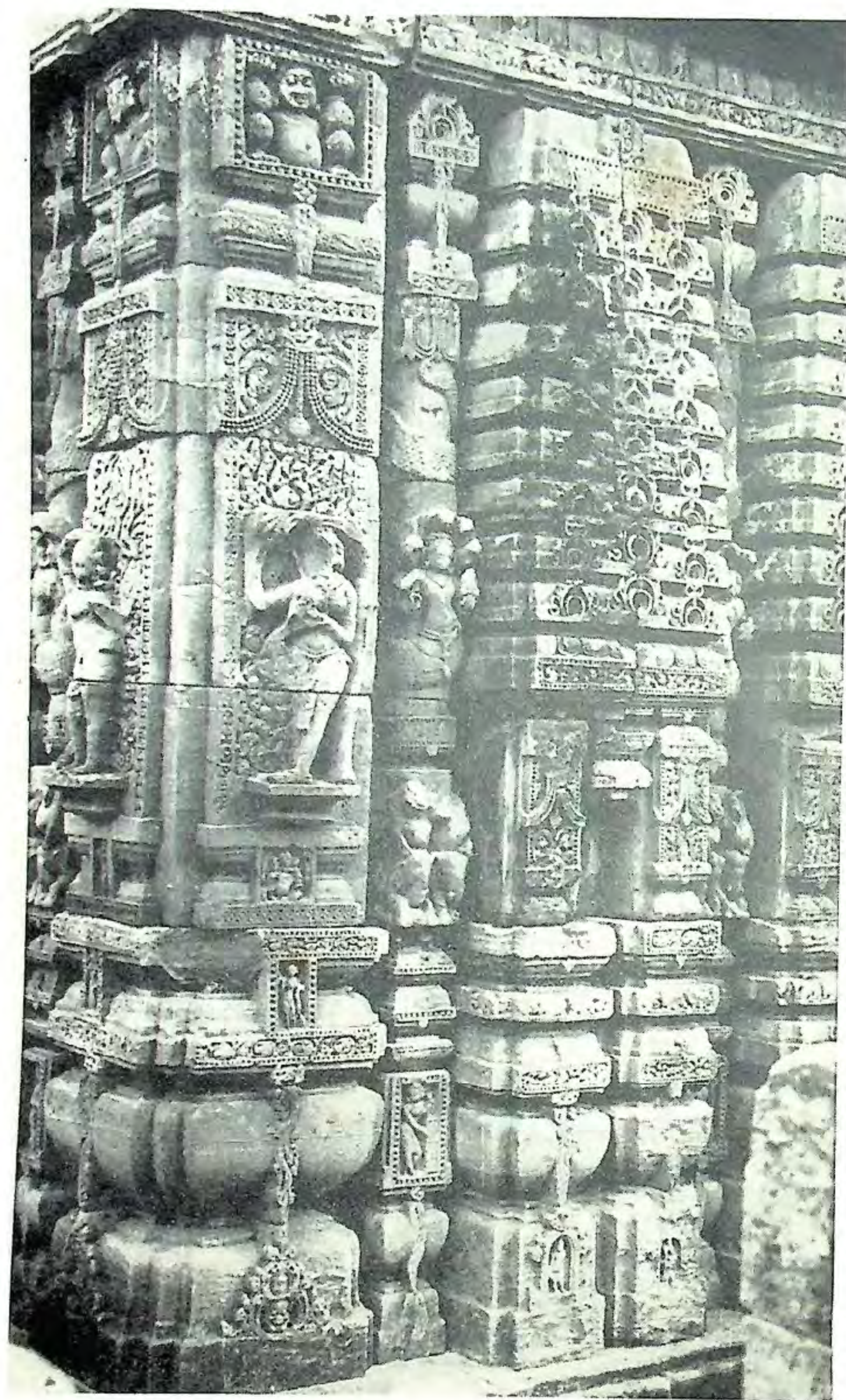
Left. The Muktesvar temple. The *torana* leading into the temple.
Below. A reclining *Kanya* from the top of the *torana.*





Above left. Panel of frolicking monkeys bordering the *mukhasala* window. *Above right.* Little figure reminiscent of a Jain image along the base mouldings. *Right.* 8-petalled lotus with the *saptamatrikas* and Virabhadra decorating the ceiling of the *mukhasala.*





Intricate carving on the walls of the Muktesvar *mukhasala*.

block decorated on two sides with a barrel-vaulted shrine. At the upper four corners of this base are placed lions crouching on elephants. The shaft is a 16-sided pillar decorated with *kirtimukhas* holding long beaded garlands. The arches of the *torana* with a *makara* head at each end, commences above this and on both faces of the arch are two langorously reclining, exquisitely portrayed *kanyas* reading out towards the centre. The arch is decorated with a detailed scroll from one end to the other, and at the apex is placed a *kalasa*.

The low courtyard wall which follows the basic floor plan of the temple, is decorated with a series of small niches treated as shrines, and above each is a *chaitya* arch containing a human or lion head. The niches at the corners of each recess and projection of the wall contain figures of gods some 6 inches or so in height. We see an early style of Kartikeya seated astride his peacock, as well as the later variety of Kartikeya with both peacock and cock. There is Surya, and there is Lakulisa seated in *padmasana* holding his *lakuta*. There are two intriguing images, the one seated in *padmasana* with hands in the *dhyana mudra*, and the other with *yogapatta* round his knees. Neither of them have the *lakuta*, which would identify then as Lakulisa images and one wonders if the figures are to be identified as Buddha images Below the niches are elongated arches many of which house figures, some four inches high, of standing males with elongated arms reaching down to their knees. These have been identified by Panigrahi[1] as Jain tirthankaras, presumably because of this *kayotsarga* pose of the hands. We have seen earlier that the essential identity of style between Buddhist Ratnagiri and contemporary Hindu temples must have been the result of the same school of artists working for different patrons.[2] The inclusion on the Muktesvar temple of images that appear to be of Buddhist or Jain affiliation is perhaps to be put down to this same reason. Such images would be the standard part of the repertoire of artists who had long worked on Jain or Buddhist monuments, and they might have sculpted them when left to themselves to complete the decoration of the low wall enclosing a Hindu temple. The figures are by no means in prominent positions and they are of dimunitive size.

GAURI TEMPLE AT BHUBANESVAR

The Gauri temple at Bhubanesvar is a *khakhara* shrine of the advanced *kamagarbha* type and the treatment of its barrel-vaulted *sikhara* is in many ways similar to that of the Chaurasi temple of the Transitional Phase. The *konakas* and *anarthas* of the *sikhara* are moved half a width inwards, with *kalasas* placed along the level where the second portion of the roof commences. The topmost portion of the roof is built of plain undecorated blocks of stone that are today whitewashed. The *bho* arch, carved with great attention to detail, appears prominently in two levels on the *rahas* of the *sikhara*.

The treatment of the walls of the Gauri shrine is a direct follow-up from the Transitional *padmagarbha* temple, the Tirthesvar at Bhubanesvar, but there is now complete assurance in the handling of the theme. The *konaka* pilasters are decorated with a *kanya* with a scroll behind her, *kirtimukha* garland and *bhara-vahaka*. Some of the *konaka* kanyas have unfortunately been subjected to re-cutting in modern times and they sadly lack the grace of their original, damaged but untouched sisters. The *anarthas* are treated

as side niches finished as a *pidha* roof with a vertical band of scrollwork down this roof. The central *parsva-devata* niche is flanked by pilasters carved like the *konakas*, with exquisite *dalamalika kanyas*, scroll, and *kirtimukha* garland. This repetition of the theme of the *konaka* pilasters with *kanyas* on either side of the *parsva-devata* niche, as well as on the side of the niche where it projects beyond the shrine wall, is a characteristic feature of our Culmination temples. The *anuraha* treated as a serpent pilasters is to be seen only on the back wall of the shrine, their absence from the two side walls being perhaps due to shortage of space on the two narrower sides of this rectangular Devi shrine. Base mouldings are of category III (a), with the topmost level treated as a *damarugarbha*, rather than of III (b) such as is prescribed for a Devi shrine. Curiously, in this too the temple follows the *padmagarbha* prototype of the Tirthesvar. Along each level of the base mouldings, of the temple walls of the *sikhara*, are narrow bands of leafy scrolls of different types, carved with painstaking attention to detail, the entire producing a rich effect.



The *chakra from* the top of the Ganesvarpur temple.

The temple stands on a basement upheld by rows of *bhara-vahakas*. The shrine doorway is decorated with a *navagraha* lintel which made its first appearance in the Transitional Phase and is to remain the norm throughout the period of the later mature Orissan temple. The *mukhasala* is a square, unpillared hall, rebuilt recently of plain blocks of stone and whitewashed. It has a roof of the *pidha* variety that is pyramidal and is topped with a *kalasa* and we assume that this restoration follows the damaged original.

The treatment of the *parsva-devata* niches, the elaborate *bho* arches, the *navagraha* lintel above the shrine doorway, the square unpillared *mukhasala* with a pyramidal *pidha* roof, and particularly, the accomplished nature of the carving and that loving attention to detail displayed on the Gauri temple are of all features typical of a temple of the Culmination Phase.

VISHNU TEMPLE AT GANESVARPUR

Standing in picturesque isolation on the outskirts of the village of Ganesvarpur near the river Virupa is a large derelict *panchayatana* temple dedicated to Vishnu. It is in a considerably ruined condition. Of the main temple, only the mouldings of the *mukhasala* and part of the walls of the shrine remain, but three of the four corner shrines are still in a reasonably intact condition and these give us a clear picture of the one-time appearance of the main temple. The base mouldings of these shrines are of category III, with the leaf-like strip connecting the levels. The walls are *pancharatha* and consist of a central *parsva-devata* niche, *anarthas* treated as side niches and completed as barrel-vaulted shrines, and *konakas* carved as scroll pilasters. The *parsva-devata* niches are flanked on the sides of the projection also by *konaka*-style pilasters. The recessed *bandhana* contains figure sculpture, and above is a *pancharatha sikhara*. The *konaka* of the *sikhara* is in five units of three levels each, and the *anarthas* and *raha* have that delicate tracery of intertwined arches which is a hallmark of temples of our Culmination Phase. There are no *anurahas* with naga pilasters that we have come to expect in a Culmination Phase temple, but their absence may be due entirely to the small size of the corner shrines, and it is possible that they may have been part of the decorative scheme of the main temple.

The base mouldings of the main shrine and *mukhasala* are clearly identifiable as belonging to category III. The walls of the main shrine are *pancharatha* and are treated in the same manner as the corner shrines with projecting *parsva-devata* niches flanked on the sides too by *konaka*-style pilasters. Here also, it would appear that there are no decorated *anurahas*, but in the present ruined condition of the shrine, it is difficult to be positive on this point. Within the shrine is a large image of a standing Vishnu with four arms and with a female figure on each side, holding a lotus. Lying around amidst the ruins is the large *chakra* that crowned the *sikhara*.

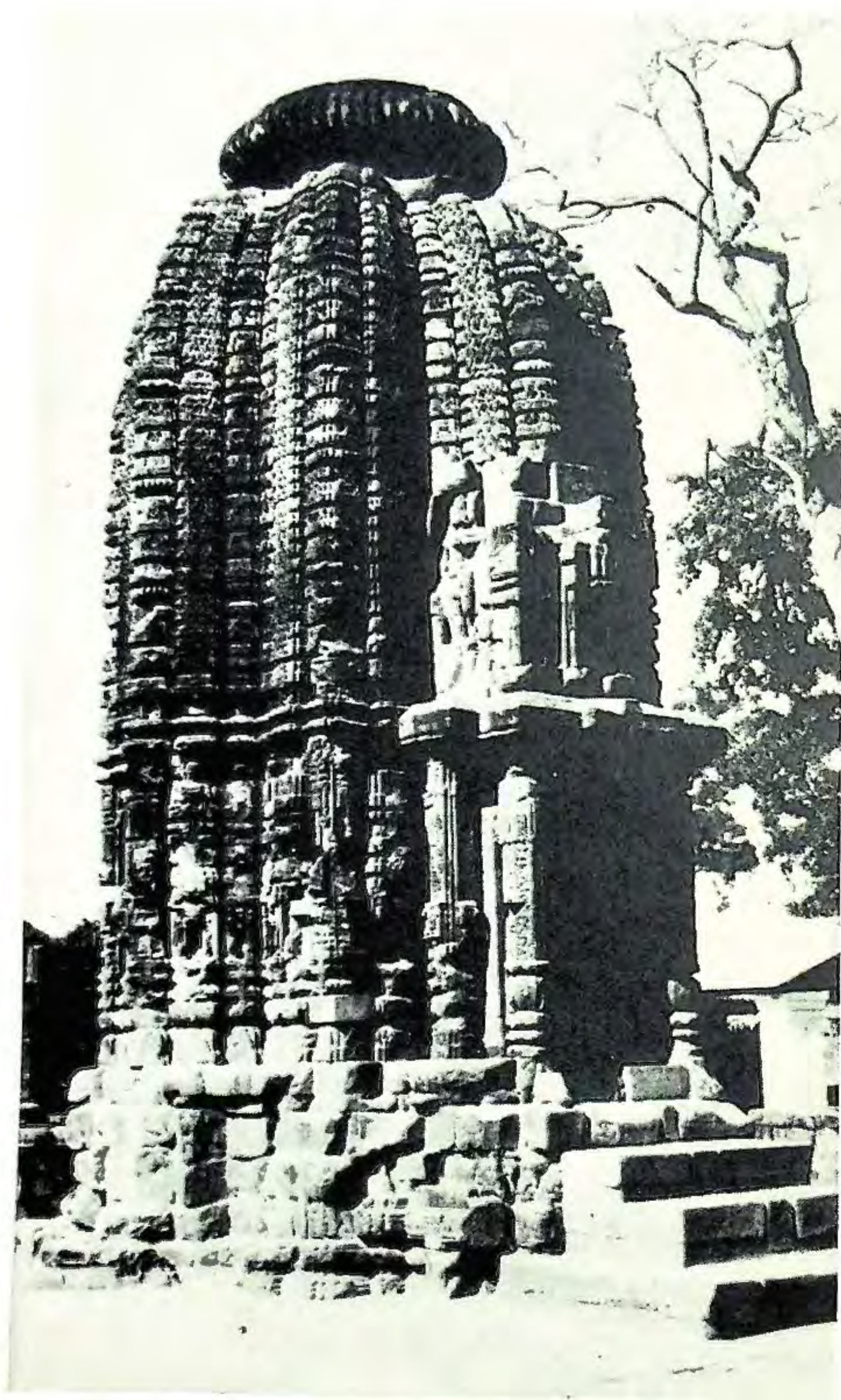
The *mukhasala* is an exceedingly large one with apparently a single doorway in front. In plan it is square and unpillared, and one assumes that the roof was of the pyramidal *pidha* variety, although we have absolutely no evidence of this. Two large pillars with nagas and naginis are lying around amid the ruins and it is possible that they flanked the entrance. The *pancharatha* treatment of the corner shrines, their elaborately carved rows of scrolls and the tracery of intertwined arches on the *sikhara* assign this temple to our Culmination Phase.

SIVA SHRINES AT BAUDH

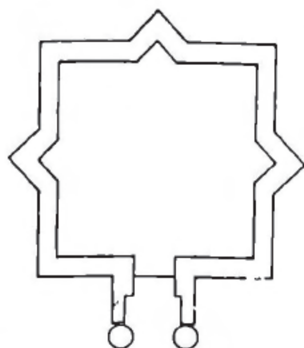
Standing in the compound of the later Ramesvar temple in the town of Baudh are three shrines, star-shaped in plan with a tiny rectangular portico

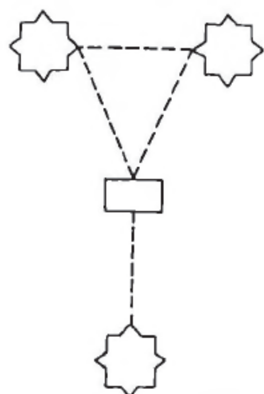


The badly dilapidated *panchayatana* temple at Ganesvarpur.



One of the three unique star-shaped shrines at Baudh.





Plan (*top*) and relative placing (*bottom*) of the Baudh shrines.

in front taking of the place of the *mukhasala*. Each temple houses a linga placed on a star-shaped *yoni pitha*, and each shrine is raised on a high plinth with steps leading up to it. The triangular placing of these temples within the courtyard is quite unusual. They definitely do not represent three of the four corner shrines of a one-time *panchayatana* temple in which the main shrine has been obliterated. Banerjea's sketch shows quite clearly that the placing is not correct for such a temple and his suggestion that the configuration has Tantric significance way be accepted for want of any other explanation.[3]

Though unique is certain aspects, the Baudh shrines bear striking resemlances to the temples just considered, and belong quite definitely to the Culmination Phase. Base mouldings of each shrine are of category III, but more elaborate than those we have considered as there is here one extra rectangular level above the *damaru-garbha*. The leaf-like strip extends all the way down the four levels ending at the top of the arch decorating the *khura*, and each level is painstakingly carved with bands of leafy scrolls. The treatment of the wall surfaces too is typical of the Culmination Phase. However the star-like plan results in the shrine having seven *konakas*, each treated as pilasters decorated with a *kanya*, scroll and *kirtimukha* with garlands. The most popular *kanya* is the *dalamalika* holding a branch of a tree, and the *konakas* terminate with a *bhara-vahaka* as is standard in the temples we have looked at. The facets between are treated as *anarthas* and display a niche completed as a barrel-vaulted shrine. The pilasters flanking the niches are decorated with the scroll and *kirtimukha* garland. The star plan results in the absence of any *rahas*. Beyond the plain recessed *bandhana*, the *konakas* of the *sikhara* are divided into five units of three levels each. The decoration includes that tracery of *chaitya* arches which is so striking a feature of all Culmination temples.

The tiny entrance portico is flanked by pillars rising out of a *ghata*, with a shaft decorated with the scroll motif and *kirtimukha* with garlands. Above the portico and cutting across all the facets is a projecting front *raha* treated as a niche which is today empty. The sides of this projection have large *dalamalika kanyas* carved against them. The shrines have *navagraha* lintels over the entrances. Despite the many questions raised by these unusual shrines, by their placing and by their significance, one fact is certain—the shrines were built definitely during the Culmination Phase of the early Orissan temple.

KHICHAKESVARI TEMPLE AT KHICHING

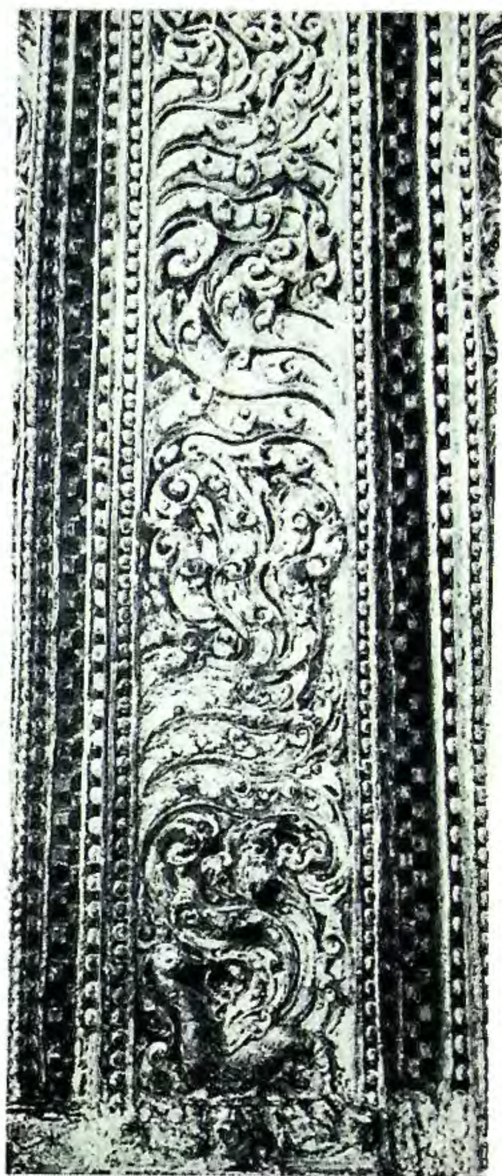
Khiching in Utkala is a site that is today difficult of access and remote from the main areas of activity in Orissa. Judging however from the masses of architectural and sculptural ruins at the site, it must have been a major centre of civilisation. The reconstituted ruins of three temples may be seen at the site, and of these the Khichakesvari is of special interest here. As it stands today the temple is a tall and disproportionate shrine which indicates it was wrongly reconstructed in the first quarter of this century. It is not known where the then raja of Khiching got his ideas for such an unfortunate restoration, since old photographs of the site indicate that there were merely enormous masses



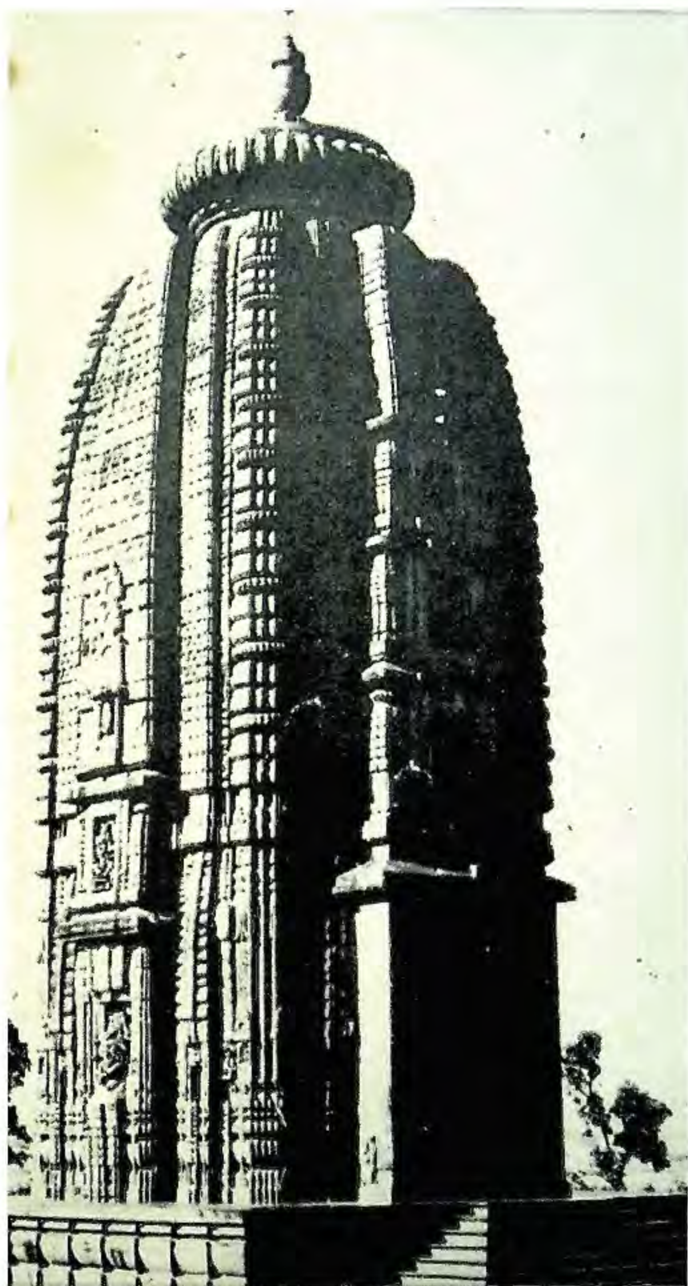
Left. Decorative detail from the Muktesvar temple. *Below left.* Vibrant dancing Ganesa from the Khichakesvari temple. *Below right.* A decapitated *kanya* from the Khichakesvari.







Right. Floral panels from the Khiching temple.



Left. The reconstructed Khichakesvari temple.

of fallen stones lying in mounds in different parts of the site. The vast collection of images in the site museum testifies to the existence of more than one other important temple of a style similar to the Khichakesvari.

The various sections of the Khichakesvari temple wall appear however to have been correctly put together as a *pancharatha* structure. The central *parsva-devata* niches contain powerful and superby carved images of Mahishmardini, Kartikeya and dancing Ganesa. The *anarthas* have a niche completed as a barrel-vaulted shrine with a band of scrolls down the levels of the roof. The *konakas* are basically treated as pilasters but they have also a tiny niche above which is the scroll, *kirtimukha* garland, and *bhara-vahaka*. The *anurahas* between have an ascending naga or nagini pilaster that rests on a block carved with a lion crouching on an elephant. The nagas and naginis are highly accomplished pieces of carving. This decorative treatment of the shrine wall is one with which we are by now familiar. The *anarthas* and *raha* of the *sikhara* have that tracery of intertwined *chaitya* arches that is typical of the Culmination Phase. Base mouldings of the temple belong to category III, and here, as at Baudh, there is an extra level of mouldings above the *damaru-garbha*. Small panels are inset into the lowest section of mouldings and these contain a large number of erotic figures and occasionally *kanyas* and deities.

The restoration of the temple appears, however, to be incorrect in several details. The *sikhara* is exceedingly tall and disproportionate and consists of ten levels of two sections each, and is minus both the *bho* arch and the earlier style of *vajramastaka*. This is presumably due to incorrect restoration. There appears also to be some confusion in the dedication of the temple; either the wrong image has been placed in the sanctum, or if the image is the





Images of a naga and nagini from Khichakesvari.

original one, then the shape of the shrine and the placing of the *parsva-devatas* is incorrect. The shrine is square, as a shrine for Siva or Vishnu should be, and the placing of Ganesa, Kartikeya, and Mahishmardini in the *parsva-devata* niches would suggest that the temple is dedicated to Siva. Today, however the shrine houses a large skeletal image of ten-armed Chamunda with prominent veins, ribs and sunken belly, wearing a garland of severed heads and seated on a corpse. We have seen that the Orissan temple architects adhered strictly to the regulation that a Devi shrine must be rectangular, while this one is square in plan. In addition the *parsva-devatas* are those of a Siva shrine.

We would suggest that there was more than one temple of the Culmination Phase at the site of Khiching, one dedicated to Chamunda, and more than one to Siva, and that the Khichakesvari temple as we see it today is a combination of images from Siva and Chamunda temples. That there was more than one Siva temple at Khiching we deduce from the number of large and beautiful images in the site museum which must have once occupied prominent positions in these Siva temples. Several of these figures are four feet and more in height and included in this group is a remarkable standing Siva flanked by Chanda and Prachanda. There are also exquisite images of Parvati and Ardhanari which must have occupied the *parsva-devata* niches in the Chamunda temple. Perhaps most remarkable of all the sculptures are three large images depicting Siva and Parvati seated. One such chlorite piece, six feet in height, and today placed casually in the office room, is a superb testimony to the achievement of Orissan sculptors. It is difficult to describe adequately the perfection of the gentle smile on the faces of Siva and Parvati, or the tenderness in their expression. Loving attention has been paid to detail. Siva's matted locks, Parvati's headdress, the details of the jewellery worn by both, the drapery of Parvati's skirt are all carved with meticulous care. Parvati is seated on Siva's left knee, and Siva is depicted with *urdhva linga* as is standard throughout Orissa. Four-armed Siva raises up Parvati's chin with one hand, another is placed against her breast, while two hold lotus and tident. Parvati holds a mirror in one hand and her other hand is placed along Siva's shoulder.

8

Inscriptions

Some of the early Orissan temples, for which in previous chapters we have proposed a relative chronology, contain inscriptions in them. The dangers of dating based on palaeography have often been pointed out, and it is certainly true that the date at which a record is inscribed on a temple need have no direct connection with the date at which the temple was constructed. It proves, at most, the date at which the temple was already standing. It would however be interesting to look at the temple inscriptions to see if their contents throw any light on the building of any of the shrines, and also to see if they allow of any accurate dating from the point of view of palaeography.

Vast numbers of copper-plate inscriptions of the rulers of Orissa have been discovered from various parts of the state. These inscriptions are lengthy ones and a complete record would be inscribed on three to six copper-plates, held together with a ring which has on it a seal engraved with the emblem of the dynasty. Usually the copper plates are dated in regnal years, but sometimes specific era dates are found. One might imagine that with such a wealth of inscriptional material it would be an easy matter to draw up a palaeographical chart for Orissa, detailing the development of the script. But curiously no such study has yet been made.

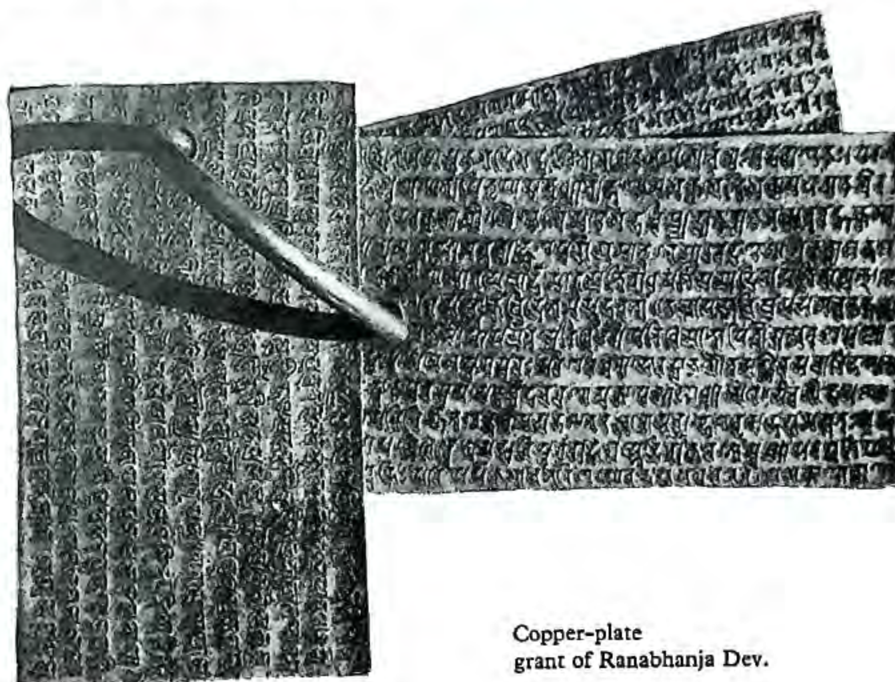
So complicated is the history of the different dynasties of Orissa and so varied are the dates assigned to different eras, that we are left with very few fixed dates which we could use to 'pinpoint the various stages of palaeographic development. We have, in fact, few absolute dates until we come to the Saka era inscriptions of the later rulers around 1000, by which time the early Orissan temple had reached its culmination. There are only a handful of earlier inscriptions to which an absolute date may be assigned, and these records are dated in the Gupta era which, it is accepted, commenced in 320-321.

FIXED DATE INSCRIPTIONS

Table I summarises the salient features of some of the securely dated inscriptions of Orissa. Four of them are early records belonging to the years 569, 600, 602 and 619/20. The other two inscriptions are among many similar ones which bear a late Saka era date, and the two examined belong to 1058 and 1066. With these two sets of records as our fixed points at either end we shall attempt to trace the palaeographical development for the intervening period which is relevant to our study—the period of the Early Orissan Temple. But

first we shall examine the inscriptions which we regard as our fixed points.

The plates of Lokavigraha of 600 from the Puri district and those of Sivaraja of 602 from the Cuttack district exhibit very similar features that differ slightly from the other two early inscriptions both of which come from the Ganjam district. These two plates display the early form of *ka* ending in a straight vertical. The more striking similarities include the early tripartite form of *ya* as well as the simple form of *sa* with equal arms. The other two plates of Prithivivigraha dated 569, and of Madhavaraja, feudatory of Sasanka, dated 619 both display slightly more advanced features. Prithivivigraha's plates display the later form of *ka* in which the vertical forms a loop on the left, while Madhavaraja's record displays this later form optionally with the earlier straight vertical. Both have the later hooked form of *ya*, as well as the later looped or open-mouthed form of *sa* that is produced in a single stroke either with a loop or omitting the loop altogether. In all four inscriptions the form of *ma* is of the open-mouthed type that closely resembles *pa*. *Ra* remains a straight vertical, *na* is of the simple hooked variety and *la* is of the early type, but angular with its left hook broadened. Prithvivigraha's plates seems to display the most advanced features. But for its very clearly stated date of Gupta era 250 or AD 568, one would be tempted to place this inscription a little later than the Sasanka plate, perhaps to around 640. On the other hand, the inscription still displays the early form of *ja* with three arms, while Sasanka's plate reveals the slightly later tendency in which the upper arm is merged with the head-



Copper-plate
grant of Ranabhanja Dev.

TABLE I : FIXED DATE INSCRIPTIONS

	AD 569 Prithivi Vigraha Sumandala Plate	AD 600 Loka Vigraha Kanas Plate	AD 602 Sivaraja Patiakella Grant	AD 619/620 Madhava (Sasanka's vassal) Ganjam Plate	AD 1058 Vajrahasta III Nadagam Plate	AD 1066 Devendravarman Madagrama Grant
a						
i						
u						
e						
ka						
kha						
ga						
gha						
ca						
cha						
ja						
jha						
ña						
ṭa						
ṭha						
ḍa						
ḍha						
ṇa						
ta						
tha						
da						
dha						
na						
pa						
pha						
ba						
bha						
ma						
ya						
ra						
la						
va						
śa						
sha						
sa						
ha						

TABLE II : EARLY GANGA AND MATHARA RECORDS

	Ganga Indravarman Year 39 Jirjingi Plates	Ganga Samantavarman Year 185 Pherava Grant	Ganga Hastivarman Year 79 Narasingapalli Plates	Ganga Anantavarman Year 204 Sudava Grant	Ganga Anantavarman Year 304 Alamanda Plates	Mathara Umavarman Dhavalapeta Plate
a						
i						
u						
e						
ka						
kha						
ga						
gha						
ca						
cha						
ja						
jha						
ña						
ṭa						
ṭha						
ḍa						
ḍha						
ṇa						
ta						
tha						
da						
dha						
na						
pa						
pha						
ba						
bha						
ma						
ya						
ra						
la						
va						
śa						
sha						
sa						
ha						

mark. Sasanka's plate also reveals the beginning of a slant to the foot of *ra*.

At the other end of the scale are the inscriptions belonging to 1058 and 1066—one of Vajrahasta III and the other of a feudatory prince named Devendravarman. By now we find the tailed variety of the looped *ka*. The *ja* has its upper arm merged in the headmark, and its two lower arms curved downwards. *Ta* is of the *kutila* variety with an outward curve to the lower end of the right arm. *Na* is of the looped variety with a tail and optionally has two separate arms. *Pa* is also of the tailed variety, sometimes notched and sometimes not. *Bha* is of the open-mouthed variety; *ma* is looped and tailed, and *ya* is hooked and tailed. *Ra* has a slant on the left and is tailed. *La* has a double curve and is tailed. *Va* is rounded and has a tail. *Sa* is open-mouthed and is optionally tailed. *Ha* is also tailed. The letters of these inscriptions are closely akin to the Devanagari script, and the line head-mark extends all the way across the letters.

EARLY GANGA AND MATHARA RECORDS (TABLE II & III)

Apparently prior to the inscriptions dated in the Gupta era, are a series of records from what is today north Andhra, but which may justifiably be regarded as the southernmost extension of Orissa in ancient times. With a few exceptions, these inscriptions all belong to the Ganga and Mathara dynasties who ruled over ancient Kalinga. Among the most noticeable similarities of these records are the forms of *a*, *ka* and *ra*, all of which have an elongated vertical with an angular upward bend. Common to all is the early form of *ja* with three arms. Common also is the tripartite *ya*, with an open or a closed loop on the left arm, and occasionally with no loop at all. *Ma* is of the broad looped variety. The base is usually notched and occasionally the top open portion is shifted considerably to the right. The form of *la* is one with its upper curve extended downwards considerably. Its base is often notched and while the shape is occasionally angular, it is more often noticeably rounded. *Sa* is of the early type, usually, with equal arms and mostly angular. *Ha* often has equal arms and quite frequently displays a notched base. *Va* too has the notched base and its form varies from roughly triangular to a broad-bodied shape. The form of *bha* is generally of a broad notched variety. *Pa* has its left arm bent outward and often has a notched base. *Na* is of the looped variety. *Da* is more angular than rounded and has its mouth open to the right. *Ta* generally has its right lower vertical extended.

Most of these inscriptions have a noticeable dark square headmark. Very occasionally there is just a line headmark and sometimes it is triangular. In two instances, in the Andhavaram (Srikakulam district) plates of Ganga Indravarman, and in the Andhavaram plates of Mathara Ananta Saktivarman, we find a double dot headmark. This seems to have been a local peculiarity of the Andhavaram area. The first few rulers of the Mathara family call themselves Maharaja while the later ones all describe themselves as *Kalingadhipati* or lord of Kalinga. Most of their grants are issued from Simhapura and Pishtapura and one is from Sarapalli. We have seen earlier that Kalinga was the area from the Godaveri to the Vamsadhara rivers. The first Mathara ruler was Umavarman and after this the names of some ten rulers are known. In the time of Samudragupta they must have been minor chiefs who gradual-

TABLE III : EARLY GANGA AND MATHARA RECORDS (Contd.)

	Mathara Chandavarman Year 4 Bobbili Plates	Ganga Indravarman Andhavaram Plates	Mathara Anantasaktivarman Andhavaram Plates	Tushtikara Terasingha Plates	Bhattaraka Kesaribeda Plates
a					
i					
u					
e					
ka					
kha					
ga					
gha					
ca					
cha					
ja					
jha					
ña					
ṭa					
ṭha					
ḍa					
ḍha					
ṇa					
ta					
tha					
da					
dha					
na					
pa					
pha					
ba					
bha					
ma					
ya					
ra					
la					
va					
śa					
sha					
sa					
ha					

ly became more important. Their terminal date must be prior to 569—the first known date of Prithivigraha who appears to have defeated the Matharas, captured the town of Pishtapura and established the rule of the Vigraha family. We have no absolute dates from any of the Mathara grants, but the Matharas appear to belong to the period after the southern expedition of Samudragupta in 350, and before the record of Prithivivigraha of 569.

Palaeographically we are faced with a problem when studying the inscriptions of the Matharas and the early Gangas. The forms of the letters are so close that one would consider these dynasties to be contemporary. To separate the rulers by a period of 200 years as has been done by historians, appears quite inacceptable palaeographically. The problem is compounded by the fact that they come from the same basic area and that both sets of rulers call themselves *Kalingadhipati* and *Sakalakalingadhipati*. The Ganga capitals are Dantapura and Mukhalingam while the Mathara capitals are Pistapura and Simhapura. All Mathara grants come from the Srikakulam and Vizagapatnam districts, while Ganga grants are from the Srikakulam and Ganjam districts. Mathara and Ganga grants have even been discovered from the same village, Andhavaram. Rajguru has placed Mathara Anantasaktivarman and his Andhavaram plates at 360-392. He has then suggested that the Ganga era commenced at 626, which would place Indravarman's Andhavaram plates in Ganga era 133 to 759.[1] Palaeographically this gap between the two is quite inadmissable, particularly when one compares these two sets of records in Table II. Palaeographically speaking the early Ganga grants display features earlier than the dated records of 569 and of 619. The Sumandala plate of Prithivivigraha of 569 from the Ganjam area displays a later form of *ka*, *ma*, *ya* and *sa*. Palaeographically, one would be tempted to assign the early Ganga records to somewhere around this same date of 550-560. It is only with the inscription of Anantavarman of Ganga era 204 that we find the later looped *ka* used interchangeably with the early *ka*. *Ma*, *ya*, and *sa* still retain their early forms.

We have a few isolated records from other parts of Orissa that display palaeographic features similar to those of the Mathara and Ganga records. Noteworthy are the plates of Tustikara from the Kalahandi district of interior Orissa, bordering on Madhya Pradesh, and the plates of Bhattaraka from the Koraput district of south Orissa. This unsual and isolated occurrence of the Kalinga type of script in the heart of the Tosali area is perhaps to be explained as the work of a Kalinga scribe who found himself in this region.

SOMAVAMSI INSCRIPTIONS IN KOSALA AND ORISSA (TABLE IV)

The copper-plate inscriptions of the Somavamsi rulers of Kosala all display what is apparently a highly stylized and ornate form of script that is peculiar to all of central India. The script is box-headed and very angular. All the letters display early forms *eg*., *ka*, *ma*, *ya* and *sa*. The letters are beautifully formed and quite strikingly elegant. However, this style seems to have been reserved for princely charters on copper-plates since inscriptions of stone belonging to the time of the same rulers display quite a difference in style. Thus for example, consider the vast difference in Table IV between the numbers 3 and 4 on the one hand and the numbers 5, 6, and 7 on the other,

TABLE IV : PANDUVAMSI/SOMAVAMSI INSCRIPTIONS

	Tivara Beloda Plates	Mahasivagupta Year 9 Bardula Plates	Mahasivagupta Year 57 Lodhia Plates	Mahasnagupta's mother vasata Sirpur-stone	Balarjuna Sirpur-stone	Sivagupta Balarjuna Senakapat-stone	Janamejaya Year 6 Nagpur Plates	Janamejaya Year 17 Sonepur Plates
a								
i								
u								
e								
ka								
kha								
ga								
gha								
ca								
cha								
ja								
jha								
ña								
ṭa								
ṭha								
ḍa								
ḍha								
ṇa								
ta								
tha								
da								
dha								
na								
pa								
pha								
ba								
bha								
ma								
ya								
ra								
la								
va								
śa								
sha								
sa								
ha								

all belonging to the time of the same king Mahasivagupta Balarjuna. Quite apart from the ornateness of the former and the open box-head at the top, the actual forms of the letters are different in the latter group and are what we would normally have described as later and more advanced.

In the stone inscriptions *ka* frequently has a tail, and *ja* is in the process of losing its upper arm. *Ma* has lost its early form and is of the open-mouthed variety with either a closed or an open hook to its left. *Ya* is no longer tripartite but has a hook to the left, and occasionally the beginnings of a tail. Hooked *na* has a tail and *ra* has a distinct slant at its lower end. *La* usually has a double bend and *sa* is of the open-mouthed variety, optionally with a tail. *Sa* is formed in two strokes, the first stroke being curved round to meet itself and the second being a plain vertical. While the copperplate inscriptions give the feel of an early palaeographic date, the stone records of the same rulers provide evidence to the contrary. It would appear then that the princely copper-plate style of script was an earlier script petrified at a certain stage of its development, while the stone inscriptions give us a truer indication of the development of the letter.

The stone inscriptions of Mahasivagupta Balarjuna display features somewhat in advance of the Sasanka inscription of 619. This latter inscription, as we have seen, was engraved by Madhavaraja, a subordinate chief of Sasanka who, soon after this date, declared his independence and founded the Sailodbhava dynasty. His inscriptions prove that he ruled for fifty years, and that his son and successor Madhyamaraja ruled for at least 26 years. Madhyamaraja's younger son Madhava then tried to usurp the throne, but the elder prince Dharmaraja prevailed. At least six of Dharmaraja's charters contain a verse telling us that Madhava tried to fight back, enlisting the aid of the great king Tivara. The name Tivara is an unsusual one and the only ruler we know with this name is Somavamsi Tivara. Palaeographically, on the evidence of copper-plates alone, it seemed impossible to identify the two Tivaras, as the copper plate characters are of a very early style. But consideration of the more advanced letters in the stone inscriptions makes this identification quite feasible, and it would appear that around the year 700 the great king Tivara was well established.

In two of Balarjuna's inscriptions the family is mentioned as *Somavamsa sambhavat*. Comparing with these records the first known inscriptions of the Somavamsi rulers from Orissa, we find that the letters now show a slight advance, but nothing so major as to necessitate a century between the records of Balarjuna and Janamejaya. This was the case when only the copper-plates of Balarjuna were considered and not the stone records belonging to his time. The main difference now, as seen in charters of Mahabhavagupta Janamejaya, is the invariable occurrence of a tail to all the letters and an outward curve at the bottom end of this tail. In addition, the line headmark extends all the way across the letters. The inscription in the Navamuni cave in the Khandagiri hill of the much later ruler Udyotakesari, whose rule ended around 1090, is very close in style to that of Janamejaya. But the Ratnagiri plates of Udyotakesari's successor Karna are in different style—a rather ornate and precise style with a triangular box headmark and with an outward curve at the lower end of the verticals very marked. The basic form of the individual letters,



however, remains much the same, indicating once again that copper-plate charters were written in an ornate and probably earlier type of script.

SAILODBHAVA INSCRIPTIONS (TABLE V)

The earliest inscription of the Sailodbhava family is the Ganjam plates of Madhavaraja, issued when the king was a subordinate of Maharajadhiraja Sasanka, in the Gupta year 300 or 619/20. This inscription we have discussed above when analysing the fixed date inscriptions. *Ka* displays two forms, one with a straight vertical and one with a hook to the left. *Ja* is in the process of losing its upper arm. *Ma* closely resembles *pa* and has no hook at its left arm. *Ya* has a hook to the left, and *ra* has the beginnings of a slant at its lower end. *Ha* is angular and *sa* is open-mouthed, and optionally has a hook to the left.

The Orissa Museum plates of Madhava dated in the year 50 reveal a few slightly more advanced features. The *ka* now invariably has a hook to the left and *pa* has acquired a tail, *bha* has become open-mouthed, and *ma* has a closed hook to the left and has also acquired a tail. *Ya* also has developed a tail, and *sa* optionally has one. The Parikud inscriptions of his successor Madhyamaraja show a slight advance. *Na* is now formed in two strokes, the one looped and the other a vertical. *Ra* has a marked slant at the lower end of its vertical and *sa* has a tail. However, the Banpur plates of the same ruler do not show these features and the script is identical to the script of Madhavavarman.

The Buguda plates of Madhavavarman pose a palaeographic problem. The text of the grant seems to indicate that it belonged to the same Madhavavarman, founder of the dynasty, who ruled between 610 to 672. Palaeographically, however, the inscription displays letters far in advance of any Sailodbhava record. It would seem to belong rather to the tenth century while the Sailodbhava dynasty itself came to an end around 750. The suggestion that it belongs to a later ruler Madhavavarman does not seem acceptable as the genealogy given is the same. The only practicable solution is to suggest that for some reason quite unknown, the grant was re-copied at a later date. Why this should have happened when the dynasty was no longer in power is far from clear.

BHAUMA KARA RECORDS (TABLE VI)

The first Kara ruler known to us through inscriptions is Subhakaradeva who issued the Neulpur plate in the year 54 of an unknown era, and in his eighth regnal year. A comparison of this record with our early dated inscriptions reveals a slightly more advanced script than those of the Sailodbhava records. There is now a definite tail to *ka*. *Ma* is of the looped, tailed variety though occasionally the loop is missing and *ya* and *sa* have a specific tail. The slant at the lower end of *ra* has now become quite noticeably a tail and the *ja* has completely lost its upper arm. The script of Subhakara's records certainly belong to a later date than that of Madhavavarman. The record of Santikara in the Dhauli cave, dated in the year 93, shows much the same features except that *ma* invariably has a loop to its left arm.

Lett. Doorway decoration from Mukhalingam.

TABLE V : SAILODBHAVA INSCRIPTIONS

	Madhava Varman AD 619/620 Ganjam Plates	Madhava Varman Year 50 Museum Plates	Madhyama Raja Parikud Plates	Madhyama Raja Banpur Plates	Dharma Raja Banpur Plates	Madhava Varman Buguda Plates
a						
i						
u						
e						
ka						
kha						
ga						
gha						
ca						
cha						
ja						
jha						
ña						
ṭa						
ṭha						
ḍa						
ḍha						
ṇa						
ta						
tha						
da						
dha						
na						
pa						
pha						
ba						
bha						
ma						
ya						
ra						
la						
va						
śa						
sha						
sa						
ha						

TABLE VI : BHAUMA—KARA RECORDS

	Subhakara Year 54 Neulpur Plate	Santikara Year 93 Dhauli Cave	Tribhuvana Mahadevi Year 158 Baudh Plate	Subhakara II Torundia Plate	Dandi Mahadevi Santigrama Grant	Dandi Mahadevi Year 180 Ganjam Plates
a						
i						
u						
o						
ka						
kha						
ga						
gha						
ca						
cha						
ja						
jha						
ña						
ṭa						
ṭha						
ḍa						
ḍha						
ṇa						
ta						
tha						
da						
dha						
na						
pa						
pha						
ba						
bha						
ma						
ya						
ra						
la						
va						
śa						
sha						
sa						
ha						

The inscriptions of what have been identified as the second, though as yet undated set of Kara rulers, show a distinct advance. In Tribhuvanamahadevi's Baudh plates, *na* is now a letter closely resembling its form in present Devanagari. The tail of *pa* has an outward curve at its lower end. This outward curve of the tail is noticed on all the letters—on *ka*, *ta*, *na*, *pa*, *ma*, *ya*, *ra*, *ta*, *va*, *sa*. *Sa* too is closer to Devanagari and so is *la* with its double bend. These records have elegant triangular headmarks, and on letters such as *pa*, *ma*, *ya*, *sha*, and *sa*, the headmark occurs on both arms. Very similar in palaeographic style are the Terundia plates of Subhakara II and the records of Dandimahadevi. A palaeographic gap is apparent between the early Bhauma Kara rulers and the later ones starting with Tribhuvanamahadevi.

BHANJA RECORDS (TABLE VII)

The records of the Bhanja rulers appear to belong to varying dates and we have seen in our historical survey that there were five groups of Bhanja kings ruling at different times over different areas. The earliest group is known through the isolated Asanapat inscription, and the very early script of this record would assign its ruler Satrubhanja to the 3rd or 4th century AD. The second group of kings ruled from the unidentified town of Varadda and the script of this family is represented by the Russelkonda plates of Nettabhanja. The script seems to be slightly earlier than that of Subhakara. *Ka* is looped but has not yet acquired a tail, and *ja* often has its upper arm clearly depicted. *Pa* and *ma* optionally have tails. *Ma* is of the open-mouthed variety but has not yet acquired the loop to the left. *Ra* has a slant at its lower edge but this has not yet become a tail. *Sa* is open-mouthed and with just the beginnings of a tail.

We have seen that the third and most important group of Bhanja rulers are from the Baudh/Sonepur area. The most prominent ruler was Ranabhanja and the script of his grant of the year 54 shows a slight advance on the writing of the time of Subhakara. *Ja* has lost its upper arm and has acquired a tail, and *va* too has a distinct tail. *La* has a clear double bend and a tail. The lower ends of verticals of all these letters have a slight outward curve. The script of Ranabhanja's inscriptions are, however, not as advanced as the records of Janamejaya of the Somavamsi family. We have a number of records of later rulers of the same Bhanja family including that of the king Satrubhanja Tribhuvanakalasa of year 198. In the time that has elapsed since the record of Ranabhanja of year 54, the script has acquired several advanced features and now very close to the records of Somavamsi Janamejaya.

The fourth group of Bhanja rulers came from the Khiching area. The records of these kings shown many similarities to those of the later rulers of the Baudh group such as Satrubhanja Tribhuvanakalasa. Possibly they are closely related in time. The script of the last group of Bhanja rulers which is represented by records of Jayabhanja from the Ganjam district, is of a very late variety. The closest affinity we can see with any records we have examined so far is with the plates of the Somavamsi king Karna, who probably belongs to the end of the 11th century. We could perhaps assign a similar date to these last Bhanja records.

TABLE VII : BHANJA INSCRIPTIONS

	Satru Bhanja Asanapat stone	Netta Bhanja Russelkonda Plates	Rana Bhanja Year 54 Baudh Plates	Satru Bhanja Tribhuvanakalaṣa Year 198 Daspalla Plates	Madhava Bhanja Khiching Grant	Jaya Bhanja Antirigam Plates
a						
i						
u						
e						
ka						
kha						
ga						
gha						
ca						
cha						
ja						
jha						
ña						
ta						
tha						
da						
dĥa						
na						
ta						
tha						
da						
dha						
na						
pa						
pha						
ba						
bha						
ma						
ya						
ra						
la						
va						
śa						
sha						
sa						
ha						

Parasuramesvar Temple (*table viii*). There are three sets of inscriptions in the Parasuramesvar temple at Bhubanesvar. The first consists of a series of labels above the eight *grahas* depicted on the lintel above the shrine doorway. The names are given as Adyatya (wrongly for Aditya), Soma, Angaraka, Vudha (Budha), Vrihaspati (Brihaspati), Sanischhara (wrongly for Sanischara) and Rahu. Panigrahi compares them to the inscription of Madhavaraja of the time of Sasanka, and assigns the *graha* labels to the same date of 620.[2] On comparison of the very few letters of these records with early Sailodbhava inscriptions, we do indeed find noticeable similarities. Both the Sasanka inscription and the later inscription of Madhavavarman (Orissa Museum plates) have the same triangular dark headmark that we find in the *graha* labels. The *ka* and *ga* of these labels is similar to the Museum plates and so is the form of conjunct *ya*. *Pa* and *ma* do not have a tail. *Sa* is open-mouthed and in one case has a distinct hook at its left. *Sa* is of the early type, formed in one stroke with a horizontal added across it. *Ra* has the beginnings of a slant to its lower end.

It seems to me risky to make specific pronouncements on the date of an inscription from the very few letters of these labels. However, we would suggest that the *graha* labels are similar to the records of Sailodbhava Madhavavarman of his year 50 and to the records of his son Madhyamaraja and would suggest that they are probably to be placed around 650/680. On the other hand, we have seen when examining our fixed date inscriptions that the Sumandala Plates of Prithivivigraha that are clearly dated to 569 have features that are palaeographically later than those of the Sasanka inscription of 620. In fact, the *ma*, *ha*, *sa*, and *pa* of the *graha* labels are very similar to those of this record. The headmark, however, is like those of the Sailodbhava inscriptions.

The second inscription in the Parasuramesvar temple is on the block of stone above the south entrance into the *mnkhasala*. It is carved in four lines on a single block of stone and tells of a gift to lord Parasesvara by Prapannacharya. The letters of this inscription are definitely later than those of the *graha* labels. While the *ka* is similar, the *ma* with a loop on its left and a tail, and the open *sa* with a tail are both more advanced features. The *ra* now has a very definite tail to the left lower end, and the *pa* too has a tail. *Ya* has a hook to the left and a tail, and *la* is of the double-hooked variety. In addition *sa* has a notch on top. The letters now have a specific line head-mark that extends all the way across open-mouthed letters like *sa*, *ma*, *pa* and *ya*. All these features make this record more advanced than the Sailodbhava records and one akin rather to the Bhauma-Kara records. We would place the script later than the Neulpur plate of Subhakara and perhaps later than Santikara's inscription of year 93 and our suggestion is that it belongs to around 850. This would imply that the inscription was engraved above the south entrance at a date somewhat after the construction of the temple. The reason for the inscribing of the record was presumably the visit to the temple by the Guru Prapannacharya.

The third set of inscriptions comprise a set of small labels carved on the east wall of the temple. These have an open triangular headmark, a *pa* with a definite tail, a *ka* with a loop to its left, and *sa* does not have a notch on its top. One of these labels is engraved in the most ornate of styles. These

Right: Linga from Parasuramesvar compound.



TABLE VIII: SOME TEMPLE RECORDS

	Parasuramesvar : Bhubanesvar			
	Graha Lables	Ornate	Miscellaneous	South Doorway
a				
i				
u				
e				
ka				
kha				
ga				
gha				
ca				
cha				
ja				
jha				
n̄a				
ṭa				
ṭha				
ḍa				
ḍha				
ṇa				
ta				
tha				
da				
dha				
na				
pa				
pha				
ba				
bha				
ma				
ya				
ra				
la				
va				
śa				
sha				
sa				
ha				

records seem to display features later than the *graha* labels, but earlier than the inscription of Prapannacharya.

Satrughnesvar Temple. The *astagraha* lintel that once belonged to the Satrughnesvar temple is now lying in the Orissa State Museum, and above the *graha* images may be seen the much damaged remains of four labels. The labels, though not fully intact, must read Soma, Budha, Brhaspati and Sukra. Panigrahi has placed the record much earlier than those on the Parasuramesvar on the available letters.[3] One clearly indentifiable letter is *ka* whch has a loop to the left as in the Parasuramesvar labels. *Sa* seems to me to be of the open-mouthed variety and *ma* has a tail. These letters, if anything, are more advanced than those we see on the Parasuramesvar and to us they do not appear indicative of a prior date. At most, one may place the Satrughnesvar and Parasuramesvar labels together.

Vaital Temple. To the right of the doorway leading into the *mukhasala* of the



Detail of *bho* motif from the Muktesvar temple.

Vaital temple is an inscription which reads *Om Sri Chandra Udah*—the meaning of which is far from clear. The letter *sa* is the only one from which we may attempt to draw conclusions on date, and as Panigrahi has pointed out,[4] it is later than the Parasuramesvar *graha* labels form of the letter. The hook on the left arm ends in a spiral that just touches the straight line that forms the right limb. Panigrahi associates this feature with the inscriptions of Subhakaradeva which he places around 800. But it must be pointed out that this form of *sa* occurs already in Sailodbhava inscriptions—in the Banpur plates of Madhyamaraja, around 690. From this piece of evidence we can say little on the date of the Vaital.

Madhukesvar Temple at Mukhalingam. There are a vast number of inscriptions in the Madhukesvar temple at Mukhalingam. Most of these are on pillars within the *mukhasala*, but several are engraved on the exterior walls of the shrine, while still others may be found on the compound wall and on the outer gateway. With such a wealth of inscriptional material one would have imagined that we would have collected a great deal of information regarding the construction of the temple. But unfortunately not a single record relates to the time of its erection. All the inscriptions are of a much later date and report the donation of gifts to the god Madhukesvar in the already standing temple at Mukhalingam. The earliest record is dated Saka 990 or AD 1068.

Isvara Temple at Paikapada. There is an as yet undeciphered and untranslated inscription on one of the pillars of the *mukhasala* of the tiny Isvara temple at Paikapada. In many respects the record appears to be similar to that over the south doorway of the Parasuramesvar temple and it displays a similar line headmark over letters like *ma*, *ha*, *ya* and *sa*. Striking similarities are the looped *ka* which has not yet acquired a tail the open tailed *ya*, looped, tailed *ma*, double-looped *la* and open-mouthed *sa* with a tail. Tentatively we would assign the record to the same date of around 850-900.

Somesvar Temple at Ranipur-Jharial. Carved above the doorway leading into the shrine of the Somesvar temple at Ranipur-Jharial is an inscription in six lines. It refers to a Gaganasiva from Uttarateramba and it tells us that by bathing in the Somatirtha tank nearby, all ones sins are washed away (*Idam tirtham snathva sarva papa vimochana*). The inscription is late, palaeographically speaking, and has a *ka* with a tail, and the late form of *sa* with a double hook on the top. *Ma* has a loop to the left and a tail; open-mouthed *sa* has a tail. *La* has a definite double bend and a tail, and *ya* and *pa* too have tails. Here also the line headmark extends all the way across letters like *na*, *ya*, *sa*. These features we have seen on the Parasuramesvar doorway and on the tiny Paikapada Isvara temple. The *ka* is slightly more advanced in that it displays a definite tail. We would tentatively assign the record to around 850/900.

Manikesvar Temple at Suklesvar. There are a number of inscribed blocks lying around the site of the temple at Suklesvar, but none of them have as yet been deciphered or translated. One set of fragments has a beautiful triangular headmark, an open triangle of a type which we do not often find in the Orissan records but which we have seen in the labels on the south wall of the Parasuramesvar temple. The letters are akin to those of Madhavavarman's Orissa

Museum plates, thou gh perhaps slightly more advanced. The *ka* at Suklesvar optionally has a tail. Open-mouthed *sa* has a tail; *ra* has a distinct slant at the lower end. *Na* is of the simple looped variety and *bha* is open-mouthed and angular. The script is similar to Sailodbhava records of around 700 and a little later. Other inscriptions at Suklesvar belong to a later period.

Kosalesvar Temple at Baidyanath. A brief inscription from this site with some ten letters only in it, is seen on a slab with a rosette in the centre. The *ka* does not have a tail; the *sa* is open-mouthed and has a tail, and the angular *ya* has a tail. The *ea* is of the type in which it has a double loop at its top of the more advanced variety. The line headmark extends all the way across open-mouthed *sa*. We see this type of writing in the records of the later Bhauma Kara rulers and the inscription may tentatively be said to belong to *c* 850-900 or later.

Amangai. High up on the *sikhara* of the Amangai temple are two lines of writing. We see the early variety of *sa* with a horizontal line joining the left and right arms which are formed in a single curve. *Va*, *ca* and *ka* do not have a tail. All three are angular letters and all have a dark triangular headmark. *Sha* is also angular and somewhat elongated. *Ka* has a hook on the left side and *ra* has a distinct slant at its lower end. From the very few letters we have, we may cautiously assign the inscriptions to the same phase as the Orissa Museum plates of Madhavavarman or to those of his successor Madhyamaraja—to around 660-690.

Patalesvar Temple at Paikapada. On one of the pillars within the Patalesvara temple is an undeciphered inscription. No fascimile copies or satisfactory photographs seem to exist of this record, but from an all-too-brief examination on the spot, it seems that the inscription exhibits features such as those of the late dated records on Plate I belonging to around 1050. All one may assume from this inscription is that the temple had been constructed prior to this date. If one needed any caution on the application of palaeography to dating, the Madhukesvar temple at Mukhalingam, with its obviously early sculptural and architectural decoration and its late inscriptions, is an outstanding warning.



Inscription from the Amangai temple.

9

Conclusions

In India, as in most other countries in ancient times, and indeed as in medieval Europe, art and royal patronage were closely connected. An artistic movement flourished with the rise of a dynasty which was directly responsible for its growth, and it often came to an abrupt halt with the end of the regime. In fact, monuments in India are generally labelled according to the dynasty under which they were constructed. We talk of Chola art, Chola temples, and Chola bronzes—the entire movement was the result of the patronage of the Chola rulers, and with the decline of the dynasty came the decline of that art. The same is the case with the temples of Khajuraho which arose under the patronage of the Chandella rulers and came to an end 150 years later with the decline of the dynasty.

Orissa, however, seems to be an exception and its temple architecture shows a smooth and continuous development that appears to proceed regardless of the vicissitudes of the various ruling families. We do not know definitely which dynasty was ruling over the Bhubanesvar area when some of its archaic early temples such as the Parasuramesvar and Svarnajalesvar were constructed. Nor do we have certain knowledge as to who was ruling the area when the Varahi temple at Chaurasi was built or when the glorious Muktesvar at Bhubanesvar was constructed. Yet the temple architecture of ancient Orissa reveals an uninterrupted continuity from its start at Bhubanesvar to its early culmination at the Muktesvar, and further on through the mature temples to its final climax at Konarak. This surely implies a strong architectural tradition, and the existence of a line of temple architects and sculptors following an established convention.

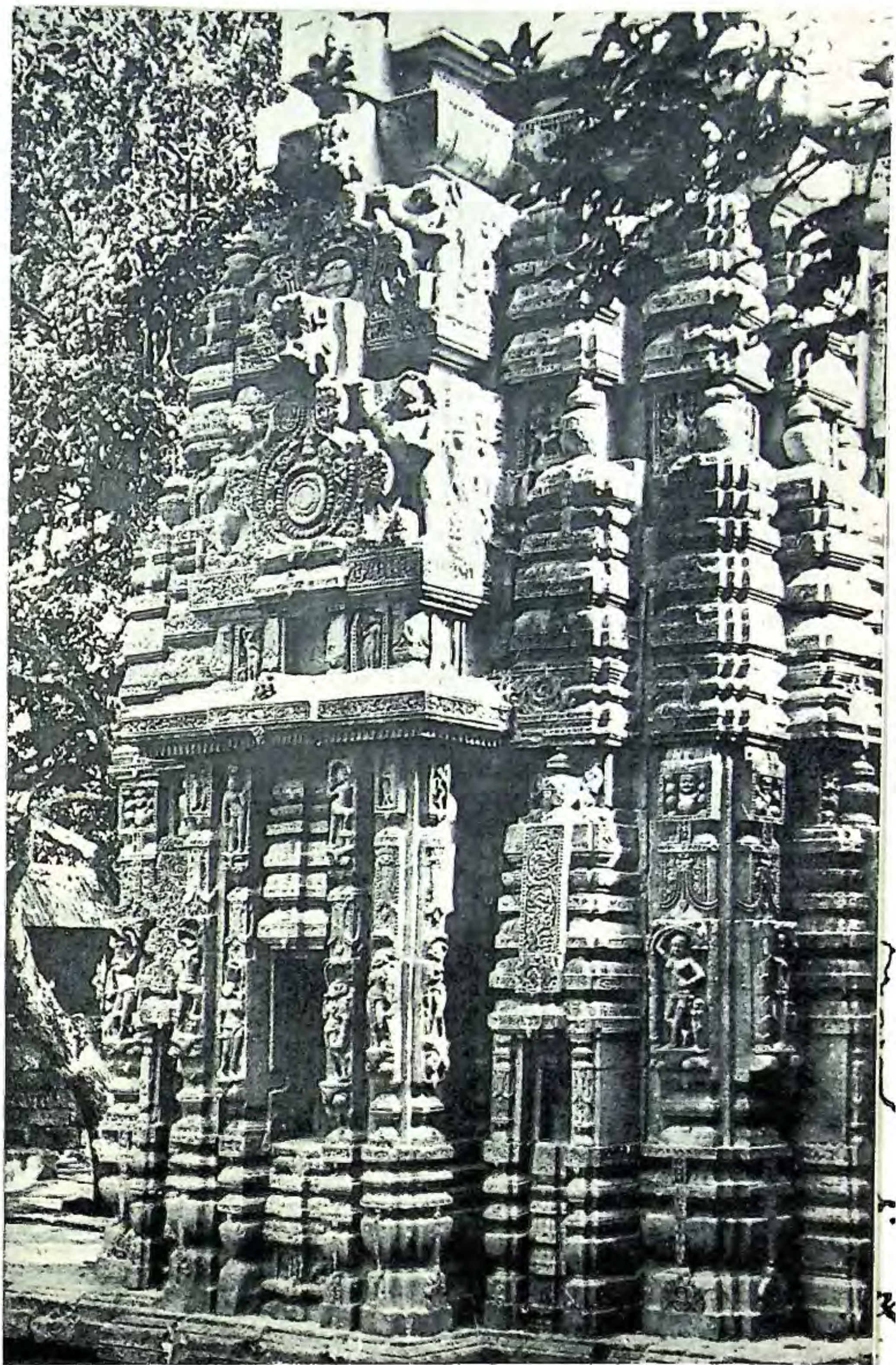
Further confirmation of the prevalence of such a craft tradition is provided by architectural manuscripts like the *Silpa Prakasa* discovered in three editions in three different parts of Orissa, and the *Bhuvanapradipa* of which we possess five different recensions. At the same time the existence of such a large number of temples in those ancient times must imply patronage—from the nobility and from the wealthy classes if not from royalty. In the period of the early Orissan temple which is under discussion, there are references in royal copper-plate charters to donations to temples and monasteries. But these references allude rather to the maintenance and upkeep of such monuments than to their construction. While a ruler like Rajasimha Pallava called himself "a great builder of temples", and Chandella Yasovarman labelled himself

"the foremost of builders", and Vikramaditya Chalukya was a connoisseur of arts who thought of himself as the "greatest of builders", not a single Orissan ruler in any of his copper-plate charters refers to his own greatness in connection with the construction of temples or monasteries. Though royal patronage existed to some extent in ancient Orissa, this patronage was not in our view the *raison d'etre* for the evolution of the early Orissan temple.

Our first enquiry in this chapter is into the probable origins of the Orissan temple—a subject that has generally been bypassed with a remark to the effect that the Orissan temple appears on the scene fully developed. Our discussion on origins takes us into the sphere of Gupta architecture and decorative sculpture, and it is here that we discover the antecedents of the Orissan temple. We shall next assign certain absolute dates for the three phases we have proposed in the evolution of the early Orissan temple. Though our architectural classification into Formative, Transition, and Culmination Phases can be put forward without hesitation, the absolute dates we suggest for these three phases must remain tentative, because unfortunately neither historical nor palaeographic evidence is conclusive in this respect.



Markandesvar, a Formative Phase temple, and (*right*) Culmination Phase Gauri temple.



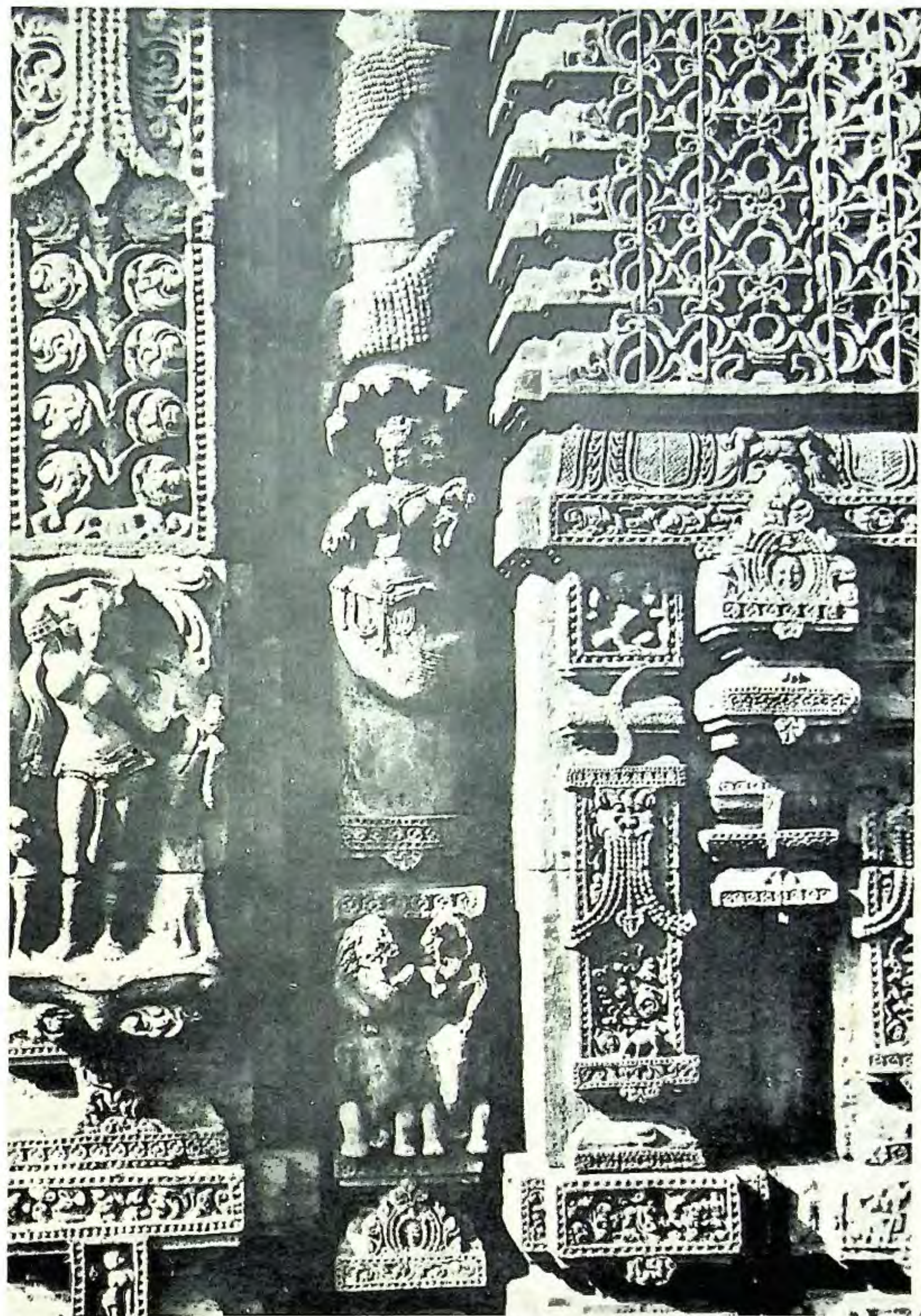
Our introductory chapter contained a brief historical survey of the ruling families of Orissa, of the areas over which they might have ruled, and a consideration of the content and nature of the several hundred copper-plates issued by them. This line of research does not reveal any direct and indisputable connection between a particular ruler or dynasty on the one hand and any existing temple or group of temples on the other. Nor can we draw any positive conclusions on the basis of the religious affiliation of individual rulers or the dynasties because of the widespread religious tolerance that we found to be prevalent in ancient Orissa.

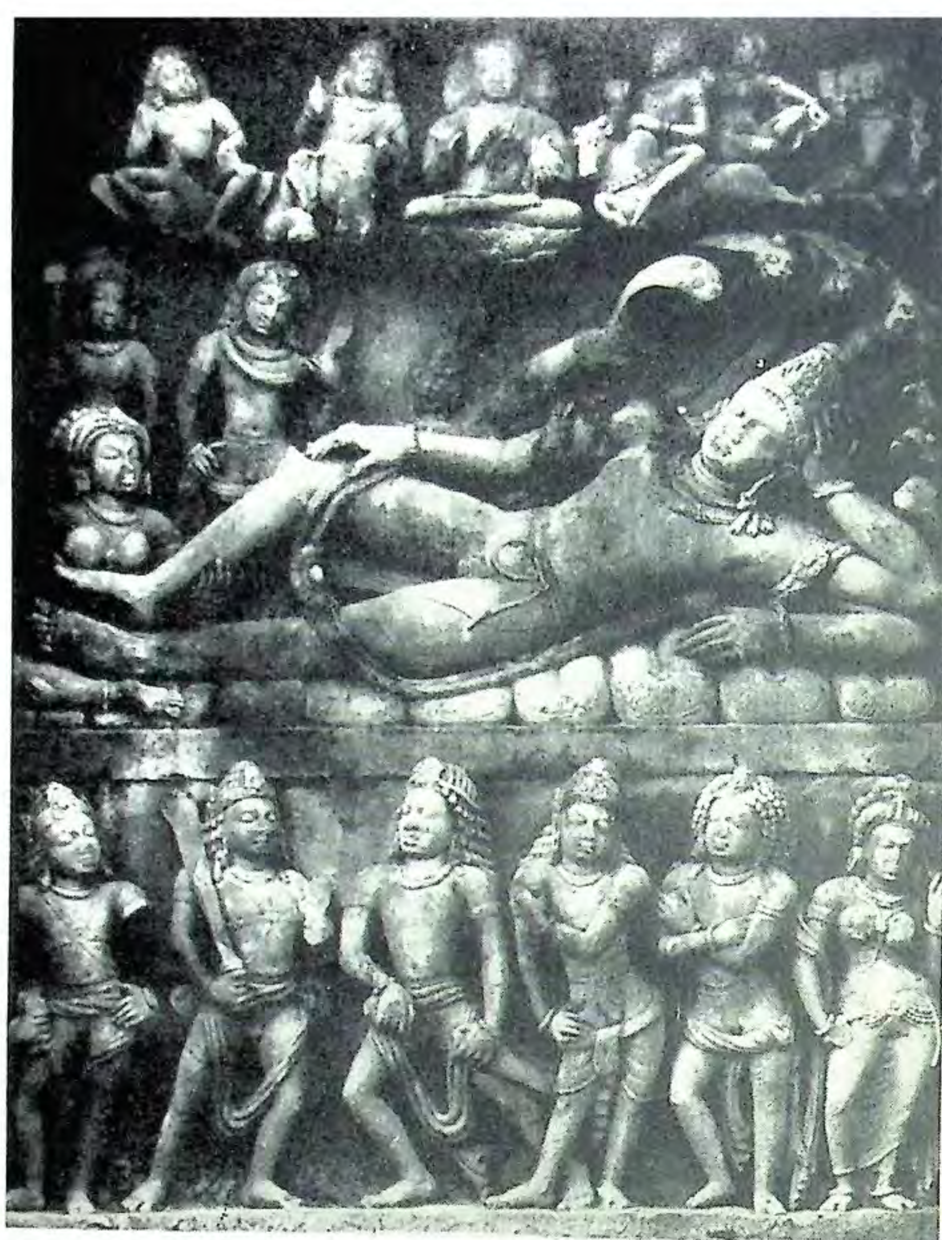
Our palaeographic analysis, in the previous chapter, of the inscriptions of Orissa suggested a possible placing for the undated inscriptions associated with certain temples. It is this palaeographic evidence that we use as the starting date for the Formative Phase of the Orissan temple. Inscribed above the doorways into the shrines of the Parasuramesvar and Satrughnesvar temples at Bhubanesvar are the names of the *grahas* or planets that are sculpted there. The labels on the Parasuramesvar temple belong to around 650. Only four of the labels remain intact on the Satrughnesvar temple, and while these have been assigned to a date as early as 575, we would prefer to allocate them to the same date as those on the Parasuramesvar temple. This piece of evidence gives us our starting date of round 600 for the Formative Phase.

The terminal date of 950 for the culmination of the early Orissan temple is based on the conviction that a period of 80 to 100 years *must* have intervened between the Muktesvar at Bhubanesvar—our Culmination temple par excellence—and the renowned, mature, and much further evolved Lingaraj temple at Bhubanesvar. The Lingaraj is generally placed around 1020-1050, and this gives us the date of 950 for the climax of the early Orissan temple. Our three phases in this evolution—Formative, Transition and Culmination—we have then placed within this period of 600 and 950, using the somewhat



Left. Early bas relief carving from the Parasuramesvar temple. *Right*. Wall of Culmination Phase Muktesvar temple.





Visnu reclining on his serpent, from the Gupta temple at Deogarh.

indefinite evidence of the few inscriptions on the temples themselves as indications of the end of one phase and the start of another.

ORIGINS

It has been commented upon that the Orissan temple appears on the scene "a complete masterpiece, with no hesitating beginnings".[1] Scholars have spoken, in this context, of the miracle of Orissan temple architecture but few have attempted any explanation for its sudden emergence. Fabri—one of those who has considered the problem—is quite sure that the explanation lies in previous Buddhist architecture in Orissa. He maintains that "further excavations will, without a shadow of doubt, support the contention that Hindu temple architecture had burst into perfection so rapidly precisely because the ground has been so well prepared for it by Buddhist monastic and ecclesiastic architecture". However he still admits that the "invention

of the temple tower remains a puzzle".[2] His hypothesis is that the Buddhists evolved the *sikhara* in an intermediary stage (of which we have no examples), and to the Buddhists also he traces back motifs like the pilaster with *purnaghata* that we see on early temples. Fabri's theory of Buddhist origins is inacceptable to us because we place the Ratnagiri monastery (his main early Buddhist site) later than the earliest temples. We have, in fact, placed Ratnagiri in Formative Phase B.

To understand correctly the emergence of the Orissan *sikhara* and of the Orissan temple as a whole, it is necessary to consider the subject in a wider perspective. It is around 600 that the early Orissan temple first appears on the scene as a mature structure. The architects apparently had an established tradition of temple-building which was possibly as detailed as the one embodied in the later *Silpa Prakasa* text. It would otherwise be difficult to explain the noticeable uniformity in style that we find among the earliest temples. We assume that temples were earlier being constructed in the medium of brick, and that some degree of standardization had already been achieved, this implying an architectural tradition going back perhaps one hundred years. We know that between 500—620, the area of ancient Orissa was within the realm of indirect Gupta influence, since certain early local dynasties made use of the Gupta era for dating their copper-plate charters. It is to the traditions of Gupta architecture that we must turn for the source of the Orissan *sikhara* and for the origin of various decorative motifs.

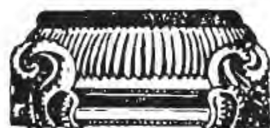
Gupta temples may be divided into three categories on the basis of their roofs. The first is a completely flat-roofed structure of which the classic example is Temple 17 at Sanchi. The second variety is exemplified by the Vamana temple at Marhia which has two levels of roofing described as "an incomplete pyramid"[3]. The most fully developed Gupta *sikhara* appears to have been that of the Deogarh temple which could best be described as a stepped pyramid. Such early *sikhara* towers seem to have consisted of two or three actual stories. Deogarh is probably the most fully evolved Gupta tower but it is still a heavy and ponderous structure, compared to which our earliest Orissan *sikhara* is a fully evolved graceful structure, in which the various stories have been fused into one continuous outline. Fabri's suggestion that only the spade will help reveal antecedents is, of course, true. But it is the further development of the Deogarh type of *sikhara* that must have led to the early Orissan *sikhara*.

With the solitary exception of Deogarh, the Gupta temple never stood on its own and there was a porch, small or not so small, in front of it. As far as the basic Orissan temple plan is concerned, the little porch in front of Gupta shrines was elongated and enlarged and became a rectangular pillared hall. The treatment of the walls of Orissan shrines is basically the same as we find at Deogarh which seems to occupy the position of a noble ancestor. There we see an elaborately decorated doorway in the front, and three large niches on the back and side walls containing scenes from Vaishnava mythology. These central sculpture niches protrude slightly and are flanked by pilasters embellished with *purnaghatas*. In the Orissa temples we have seen a similar treatment of the shrine walls, with the doorway in the front and three large niches on the three walls, each containing relief images associated with the deity to whom

the temple is dedicated. Pilasters decorated with *purnaghatas* and used to separate various images and sculptured panels frequently appear on early Orissan temples. These pilasters occur at Deogarh also as part of the plinth decoration where successive scenes from the Ramayana and the legend of Krishna are separated by pilasters embellished thus.

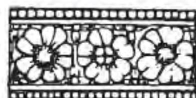


Curiously though, as we saw in our consideration of the sculptural material, there is no evidence in our earliest Orissan temples of an imbibing of Gupta sculptural style, and the slim slender bodies of Gupta Deogarh, flexed in a distinct *tribhanga* pose, are not to be seen on our first monuments. The Orissans commenced sculpting in stone temples with their own conceptual schema of flat, frontal bodies standing in relatively rigid positions. Soon however, they modified their schema, and in a relatively short span of time achieved a fluency of style.





One of the features in which the indebtedness of our earliest temples to accepted traditions of the Gupta age is most apparent is in the treatment of doorways. Consider the door frame of the late Gupta temple at Nachna Kuthra. We see there the scroll motif, Saiva *dvarapalas* with an oval halo, images of Ganga and Yamuna on *makara* and tortoise standing beyond the *dvarapalas*, a band of *mithunas*, square trellis-work panels and the very common occurrence of the wig head-dress. All these are features of standard occurrence in temples of the Orissan Formative Phase. In the early Gupta temples, the two river goddesses Ganga and Yamuna are placed high up the doorway on the level of the lintel and we see them in this position at Deogarh. In the Siva temple at Bhumara and the Parvati temple at Nachna Kuthra, both belonging to the late Gupta era, the river goddesses are alongside the base. It is this late Gupta tradition that is followed in the early Orissan shrines.





The famous *gelbai* scroll of Orissa also had its origins in Gupta times. At Deogarh the innermost jamb is a leafy scroll and on each jamb there are two little figures climbing up the creeper. The typical Orissan *gelbai* has a figure on each bend of the creeper. The gourd motif of Orissa may also be traced back to Gupta antecedents, and Deogarh, for example, has a gourd band decorating the outermost door jamb. At Bhumara we find *kirtimukhas* with strings of beads, and half-lotuses, and square and circular rosettes—all common features of the early Orissan temple. *Chaitya* arches with a dotted outline are also frequently depicted and a more evolved version of this motif is found as a prominent decorative feature in Orissan temples of the Formative Phase. Another Gupta survival seen in some of our early temples is the wig-style hairdo, in which "the hair of the male figures is arranged in the same fashion as that of the Gupta kings on their coins, with rows of curls, like the wig of a judge".[4] Early decorative motifs then, reveal a considerable borrowing from, and a continuation of Gupta traditions. There must have been a consistent and logical development in the years following this genesis. This alone would explain the close similarity among our earliest Orissan stone temples and why, for example, the Parasuramesvar, Satrughnesvar, and Svarnajalesvar should have an almost identical treatment of the front *raha*, or why all temples of Formative Phase A should have identical base mouldings. We are thus unable to agree with Fabri that no *silpa sastras* were being followed by the early Orissan architects, and it appears to us that the strong likeness existing

among the earliest shrines must surely reflect the following of a formulated tradition.

There appears to be little doubt that in many parts of India, in the late sixth and early seventh centuries, a number of local styles were being evolved out of late Gupta art. We would conjecture that this occurred in Orissa too, although today we have no extant examples of such an intermediary phase. In the late sixth century AD, we assume that the Orissan architects were building temples, perhaps in the medium of brick with the addition of doorways and sculpture niches in stone, or perhaps entirely in stone. Traditions established during the peak of Gupta power were modified or developed with some features like the *sikhara* or the dotted *chaitya* arch evolving further, some like the nature of the hall in front of the shrine changing considerably, and others, like the doorways, retaining their late Gupta style. It was probably sometime between 500 and 600 that the canons of Orissan temple architecture crystallized.

FORMATIVE PHASE A AND B : 600-750

A glance at the distribution of temples belonging to the Formative Phase suggests that the early Orissan temple first emerged as a distinct entity in the area of Tosala, where we still find the largest number of such temples. Group A of the Formative Phase includes eight shrines at Bhubanesvar (south Tosala), a shrine at Baidesvar (south Tosala), ruins at Jajpur (north Tosala), a temple at Kualo (north Tosala), a small temple at Paikapada (Kongoda), a



Left. Gupta decorative motifs. *Right.* Parasuramesvar temple belonging to Formative Phase A.



Left. Relief carvings depicting Ardhanari and Siva with Parvati (Parasuramesvar). *Right.* Decorative pilaster from Sisiresvar temple.

temple at Mukhalingam (Kalinga), and a Jain site at Subei (Kalinga). These early temples reveal a remarkable uniformity in style which suggests that the Orissan architectural tradition had already been established for a considerable time.

Temples of Formative Phase A all display simple base mouldings that we have classified as Category I. The hall is a rectangular flat-roofed structure that is usually pillared, and its roof is a double one with a clerestory cave in between which lets in both light and air. The number of doors and windows leading into this hall varies and the placing of these openings is irregular. The joint between hall and shrine is of a very basic type. The front wall of the shrine is treated as the back wall of the hall, and only three further walls are built to complete the structure. The interior of all Orissan temples, with the solitary exception of the doorway into the shrine, is severe and unsculpted, while by contrast the exterior walls are richly adorned.

There is a great deal of variation in the decoration of the walls of the hall, but we find a considerable degree of standardization on the shrine walls and tower. The shrine walls are divided into three vertical segments with a large sculpture niche in the centre of each wall, housing the *parsva-devata* or the subsidiary deity. In a Siva temple these niches house images of Parvati and her two sons Ganesa and Kartikeya; in a Vishnu temple we find three forms of Vishnu; and in a Devi temple are three forms of the Goddess. On either side of the *parsva-devata* niche is a smaller niche containing relief sculptures of the deity to whom the temple is dedicated. The tower above rises in a gradual curve to terminate in a large fluted *amalaka*. The tower is divided into five horizontal levels, separated by small *amalakis*, and each level is further subdivided into three sections. The tower also has five vertical segments, and the central one, which is the largest, contains an elaborate double arch filled in with relief sculpture. Doorways and decorative motifs reveal a considerable

indebtedness to and a continuation of Gupta traditions. Sculptural style reveals a schematic conception of the human body as a flat, frontal and relatively rigid entity.

In 600 the various regions of ancient Orissa were still under several petty ruling families who wielded limited authority over local areas. We have little information about the rulers in the area of Tosala. Certainly, there was no *one* dynasty ruling over both north and south Tosala. It is difficult to surmise what exactly could have provided the inspiration for the spate of temple-building that is suddenly in evidence. Around 620 the Sailodhavas came into power in that area of south Tosala known as Kongoda. Judging from the copper-plate charters issued by later rulers of the dynasty, this region remained their centre of activity. It seems likely that by 650 the Sailodbhavas extended their power right upto the Mahanadi river. One is tempted to suggest that the large-scale temple-building in stone that appears around this date coincides with the extension of Sailodbhava influence into the Bhubanesvar area, and on such a hypothesis, this activity must date to as late as 650. However, in the absence of any copper-plate charter of a Sailodbhava ruler proclaiming his involvement or even his interest in temple-building, such a possible correlation can remain at best a suggestion.

In the area of north Tosala which contains the Kualo *panchayatana* temple and the early shrines at Jajpur, we have no information regarding ruling families prior to Kara rule in the area which commenced in 736. Hsuan-tsang, in 638, seems to include this region in the country of Odra, but says nothing about its rulers. He tells us, however, that the area had 50 Hindu temples and 100 Buddhist monasteries. So far, no evidence of these very early Buddhist sites has been unearthed, nor have we yet located the site of the monastery of Pushpagiri, which Hsuan-tsang described at such length.[5] In the Kalinga area, the earliest shrines—Hindu Mukhalingam and Jain Subei—appear to have come into existence while the Early Gangas were in power.



We find then that there is a total lack of tangible evidence to connect the various ruling families with existing temples. Since a detailed examination of this line of evidence yields a blank, we fall back on the evidence of palaeography which provides some definite clues from which to place the Formative Phase more accurately. There are labels above the *graha* images on the lintel of the Parasuramesvar shrine doorway and the remnants of similar labels on the Satrughnesvar temple. These latter have been placed as early as 575, but we have indicated that the records belong rather to as late as 650/680. A consideration of this evidence suggests to us then that Formative Phase A extended from roughly 600 to 700. As we have no clear knowledge regarding the rulers of Orissa during this period, it appears that this was a temple movement that arose without the *active* patronage of a ruling family, and apparently as the outcome of a strong architectural tradition.

Temples belonging to Formative Phase B, as compared to those of Phase A, reveal an advance both in architectural construction, and in sculptural style. Phase B includes three important temples at Bhubanesvar—the Vaital, Sisiresvar and Markandesvar—one at Singanath on an island in the Mahanadi river, a *panchayatana* temple at Suklesvar (north Tosala), a Buddhist monastery at Ratnagiri (north Tosala), a temple at Bajrakot (north Tosala),



Durga killing the buffalo demon from the Vaital temple belonging to Formative Phase B.

temples at Mohanagiri and Ranipur-Jharial (both in interior Tosala) and a temple at Borogram (Kongoda). In this phase the nature of the joint between shrine and hall is better developed. The hall has its own back wall and a further wall is built to connect the front wall of the shrine and back wall of the hall. The hall is still rectangular and flat-roofed but the placing of doors and windows is now standardized. A single doorway is placed in direct alignment with the shrine doorway and two windows are cut in the centre of the two side walls. Base mouldings now belong to Category II. The treatment of the walls and tower of the shrine continue, basically, to be the same as before. Phase B temples display a distinct advance in sculptural style, with bodies revealing a linear grace and a slight *dehancement* that was not evident earlier. The Ratnagiri monastery, while following its own architectural principles, displays the identical base mouldings and all the decorative motifs seen on the Hindu temples. The similarity in sculptural style is so close that it is quite apparent that the same school of sculptors worked at both.

Two inscriptions, one on the Vaital temple and one at Suklesvar, are of relevance for the assignment of dates. The Vaital inscription consists of a single phase, the meaning of which is far from clear. The record has been placed palaeographically at 800 and all we can say from it is that the temple belongs prior to that date. At Suklesvar there are a large number of inscriptions on detached blocks of stone, but only one belongs to an early palaeographic date. This particular record seems to be similar to Sailodbhava inscriptions and we have assigned it to around 700. It would appear then that Formative Phase B could be placed between 680/700 to 750.

The entire group of temples of the Formative Phase are then basically prior to the commencement of Bhauma-Kara rule over north Tosala. Certain scholars have suggested that all Devi temples (including the Mohini and Baidesvar of our Phase A and the Vaital of our Phase B) owe their inspiration to the Bhauma-Karas. The basis for this suggestion is not clear to us, since the early Bhauma-Karas were a Buddhist dynasty, and there is no evidence of their being connected with Devi-worship.

PHASE OF TRANSITION:700-850

The Phase of Transition includes temples all over ancient Orissa. In south Tosala is the Varahi temple at Chaurasi, the Amangai temple on an island in the Mahanadi river, and the Tirthesvar shrine in the town of Bhubanesvar which was earlier the centre of so much activity. In north Tosala, a further phase of work is evident at the Buddhist monastery at Ratnagiri, and in interior Tosala the temples at Gandharadi Baidyanath, and Charda were built. In the Kongoda area are the shrine at Jogomunda and Paikapada, and in Kalinga is an isolated shrine at Sarapalli..

The three temples most characteristic of this Transition Phase are the Varahi temple at Chaurasi, the Tirthesvar at Bhubanesvar, and the twin temples at Gandharadi. These temples reveal a number of new features, and while the hall still continues mostly as a rectangular flat-roofed structure, the decorative treatment exhibits a completely different style. All base mouldings are of Category III. The shrine wall is now divided into five vertical segments as against the three segments of the Formative Phase. The central one still contains the



Siva with his beloved wife Parvatī, from Khiching—a Culmination Phase site.

parsva-devata niche (though this is much smaller now); the two segments adjoining contain small sculptures niches; and the two end segments are usually treated as flat pilasters adorned with a scroll motif. The *alasa kanya* or indolent maiden, a very typical note of later times, makes its first appearance here.

Also occurring for the first time is the pilaster with a naga or nagini wound around it. These figures, human down to the hips, end with a snake tail. As pilasters, they appear in the recessed portions between the five vertical segments of the shrine wall, and as pillars they flank the single doorway and two windows of the hall. It is possible that the twin Siva and Vishnu temples at Gandharadi were constructed during the rule of the Bhanja rulers of the Baudh/Sonepur group. One of the early rulers of this group was known by the name of Gandhata, and it seems likely that this ruler may have given his name to the town of Gandhatapati, now Gandharadi.

The Amangai temple on an island in the Mahanadi seems to be one of the earliest temples of the Transition phase as it reveals many features reminiscent of the Formative Phase. It is also the only Transition Phase temple which carries an inscription. This inscription consists of a few letters only, engraved, strangely enough, on one of the blocks of stone comprising the temple tower. The letters are of an early type which we have assigned to 660/690, and on this basis it might be argued that the Phase of Transition commenced perhaps as early as 700. Temples typical of the Transition Phase, such as Chaurasi, Gandharadi and the Tirthesvar, must belong to a more advanced date compared to the Amangai, perhaps to around 800. Tentatively we would allow a period of roughly 150 years for a complete transition from the Formative Phase to the Culmination Phase, and on this basis the Transition Phase could be placed from 700 to 850, overlapping at either end of the bracket with the preceding and succeeding phases.

The unique temple at Baidyanath reveals a combination of influences from both Orissa and the Sirpur area of ancient Kosala. It must belong to a date when the Somavamsis had started moving along the Mahanadi river into Orissa, and historically this would indicate a date after 800. The temple appears to belong to an advanced date within the Transition Phase. During most of the Transition Phase the Karas were ruling over both north and south Tosala, and the temples at Chaurasi and Amangai, the Buddhist monastery at Ratnagiri, and the Tirthesvar temple at Bhubanesvar must have been under their jurisdiction. The temples in Baidyanath and Charda were in border regions, partly under the influence of the Karas and partly under that of the Somavamsis.

CULMINATION: 830-950

The Culmination Phase of the early Orissan temple include the Gauri and Muktesvar temples at Bhubanesvar, the *panchayatana* temple at Ganesvarpur in north Tosala, the unusual shrines at Baudh in interior Tosala and the site of Khiching in Utkala. We have no inscriptional material in any of these temples to aid us in fixing any absolute dates.

The history of north and south Tosala during this period is quite uncertain. During part of this phase the later Bhauma-Karas must have been in power, but their domain was only over south Tosala, and that too its southernmost portions. We have no indication as to who was ruling over the Bhubanesvar area or what dynasty was in power in north Tosala. Baudh was perhaps under the rule of the early Somavamsis or was still under the control of the Bhanja rulers of the Baudh/Sonepur group. As regards the Khiching area in Utkala we can only assume that it was under the rule of those Bhanja kings who styled themselves "constant residents of Khijinga-kotta." To assign a date to these temples of our Culmination Phase, we would suggest a period from 830/850 to 900/950. The terminal date of 950 allows a period of one hundred years which, as we have stated earlier, must have intervened between the Muktesvar and the magnificent late Lingaraj temple.

With the Muktesvar temple at Bhubanesvar, the early Orissan temple reaches a climax. The hall by now has taken on a completely different appearance and is square in plan, without any pillars. The roof is pyramidal in shape and consists of a series of receding tiers that culminate in a *kalasa* at the apex. Decoration of the walls of the hall is identical to that of the shrine. The treatment of the shrine walls is basically the same as that seen in advanced temples of the Transition Phase, except that now maturity, experience, and superior craftsmanship are evident in the treatment of the sculptures. The *kalasa kanyas* and the nagas and naginis are exquisitely depicted and the delineation of the limbs speaks of advanced workmanship. The carving has depth with a soft and sensuous modelling adding a fluency of form and a linear grace that is most striking. Complete technical competence is displayed, and the harmony and rhythm evident in the balancing of figures, as well as the successful capturing in stone of delicate as also intense human emotions reveals the sculptors mastery over his craft. A prominent feature of the decoration

Overleaf. An interesting composition showing four bodies with two heads from the Muktesvar temple.

of the tower is the '*bho*' arch, a typical motif of the later Orissan temple. The earlier dotted double arch decorating the central rib of the tower has now been transformed and eleborated into a *bho* arch with two curly-headed *yakshas* leaning against it. Bands of carving on the ceiling of the hall is a feature of the Muktesvar temple—an experiment never before tried, and attempted only once later. With this tiny yet exquisite temple, Orrissan architecture and sculpture reached a definite peak.



Appendix

Extracts from the Silpa Prakasa

FIRST PRAKASA

THE PORCH (MUKHASALA)

Sri Ganesaya namah *Sri Niladrinathaya namah* *Sri Visvakarmane namah*

DHYANA ON THE IMAGE OF VISVAKARMAN

Visvakarman, Master of the sixty-four arts, mounted on Airavata, having a lustrous face, adorned with many jewels,

Four-armed divinity of immensely peaceful countenance, wearing yellow garments, adorned with armlets and necklaces,

Holding chisel (and mallet) in two of his hands, measuring rod (and thread) in the others, I salute the supremely glorious Vishnu, and praise the name of Visvakarman.

DHYANA ON YANTRAKALIKA

Mahakali, embodied in the Silpin's instruments, the very form of all knowledge (sarva-vidya-svarupini), of all the arts (sarva-silpa-mayi), eternal, the giver of all bliss,

I salute Yantrakalika (Kali of the instruments) who removes all obstacles.

PILLARS

Listen my son, I am telling you the art of making pillars. Pillars are mentioned as being of two types, one adorned with Nagas and the other with parts of water-jars.

Of these the Naga-pillar is the best and the Kumbha-pillar is called secondary. It has a water-jar above and a jar below and a beautiful shaft in the middle.

The middle of the Kumbha is beautified by creeper-ornaments with flower-buds and other things. Naga-pillars are always best for enhancing the beauty of the architectural body.

The Naga-Nayika is the giver of wealth, corn and good fortune. The Kumbha-pillar should be horizontally divided into four parts.

Two parts are for the shaft and the remaining two for the base (pada) and the capital (sirsa). The Kumbha-part should be divided into five portions (horizontally); in the lowest a flat plinth (pada) should be made.

Above the first layer the kumbha-section is of two parts. The lower half is for the hip (bulge of the kumbha) and the upper is a creeper-line.

This is the base of the Kumbha-pillar. On the belt (dori) in the middle there are creepers. In the upper portion also lines should be carefully carved, according to one's mind.

In the middle a small figure of a woman adorned with flowers. On the band below a line of creepers. The divisions of the Naga-pillar are as those mentioned before (of the Kumbha-pillar).

In the uppermost part of the pillar there is an alamba, beautiful with three strings of beads, and below the alamba there is the Naga (hood) in the shape of a half-moon.

The serpent-hoods there are either seven or five. The other hoods are made of the side of the central hood (on both sides). The central hood is slightly bigger and the side-hoods are made smaller.

Underneath the hood there is the figure of Ananta, whose shape is half Naga and half man, with a beautiful plough and pestle. or with both hands folded (baddhanjali).

Below, the Naga's body should be made with two or three coils (around the shaft), but the tail-end of the Naga must always be visible in front.

ALASA-KANYA (INDOLENT MAIDEN)

You hear, I am giving a description of the Alasa.

In local terminology it is called naribandha and is indispensable in architecture. As a house without a wife, as frolic without women, so without the figure of a woman the monument will be of inferior quality and bear no fruit.

Gandharvas, Yaksas, Raksasas, Pannagas, Kinnaras

Become enchanted on seeing the graceful postures of women. Woman is most beautiful when adorned with all ornaments.

Contemplated in various postures, she is known as Alasa, and is decorating the gavaksa, and the sikhara, the walls and other parts of the mukhasala.

This is called the Nari-bandha on the bhadra (mukhasala) and the sikhara. Hear the different manifold moods of the Alasa.

According to her moods she is given names (which are recommended by the Sastras): Alasa, Torana, Mugdha, Manini, Dalamalika,

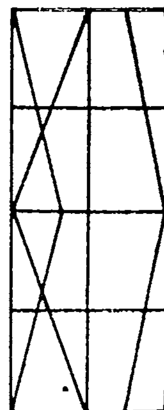
Padmagandha, Darpana, Vinyasa-Dhyanakarsita, Ketakibharana, the beautiful Matrmurti,

Camara, the best Gunthana, Nartaki, Sukasarika, the lovely Nupurapadika, Mardala, the most beautiful one.

These are the sixteen most important types of Alasa. According to the various places one or the other will be more suitable.

These figures have to be made with great care. Of all grounds the elongated rectangle is fixed for them as fundamental.

Alasa-yantra



Without a rectangular ground-panel the movement of the Alasa will not come out properly. In an upright rectangle [see figure] a middle vertical line should be drawn according to rules.

Horizontally, divisions should be made by three lines. From the left prastha-bindu two obliques go in opposite directions.

Above and below they are joined as an open triangle (to the outer lines to both sides of the madhyarekha). Again on the right side two such lines go up and down to the outer corners (from half the side of the madhyaprastha).

In the same way a line based on the side of the madhyaprastha, beginning from the side of the horizontal (middle line) reaches to the two inner corners.

This wide triangle is on the right side. This is the Alasa-yantra, which is suitable for all the kanyas.

Alasa (*indolent*)

On the left side of the middle line is the head. The breast is to be made with care in the third horizontal division.

In the centre of the upper division along the obliques, the arms should be placed above the head. The navel is on the central bindu, and the hip is on the left side.

Beginning from the madhya-bindu, the right leg should be beautifully bent; the left leg in an elongated beautiful shape is along the oblique.

Chandita or Spandita, these are the two movements of the Alasa.

Torana (*leaning against a doorway*)

The torana is made on the same yantra, only she is turned to the right side.

The arm lies on the oblique, then touches the triangle. The torana holds one hand in the spandita mudra and is very attractive.

Mugdha (*innocent girl*)

One hand with the nagasira (snake-head) mudra goes in front of the face.

The naga-mudra is on the right, the left arm is along the line.

Along the side of the triangle it is placed on the hip. The two legs are slanting towards the right side like those of the spandita-alasa.

This is the innocent maiden, adorned with all ornaments.

Manini (*resentful girl*)

The head is in the last division, turned towards the left side.

The right arm should be made along the upper oblique above the head, the right palm is on the head, the left is on the lower lip,

The left leg is straight, the right leg is bent, the shank is going backwards and touches the wall.

She should wear alambas (hanging from the hip), a beautiful breast-band (kancala) and attractively tied hair. Both eyes are half-opened and on the lips there is the mood of love (lasya-bhava).

This is the manini maiden according to the Silpa Sastras.

Dalamalika (*garlanding with a branch*)

The head is in the lower part of the tricheda (triangle) seen in beautiful profile.

There above the right forearm goes along with the branch, the right (upper) arm lies on the right side triangle.

The upper portion of the hip lies on the side in the middle and the navel in the centre-place (madhya-sthala). The left upper arm is downwards and the forearm is bent (upwards) along the outer line.

On the left side she makes the beautiful gesture of touching the end of the branch. The right leg goes across the width (prastha) and touches the left oblique.

The right shank goes along the left triangle. The left leg is on the right side standing straight.

The branch of the tree rests on the right triangle.

Padmagandha (*smelling a lotus*)

Turned to the left she is always beautiful.

She stands more to the left side (of the yantra), the head, the trunk and the legs are elegantly poised. The head is in the upper part and the chest in the third division.

The left upper arm is on the side lying along the forearm (bent upwards), she holds a fresh beautiful lotus in her left palm.

The right arm is going down straight and rests on the hip.

The right leg is slightly slanting and the lower part is receding backwards touching the wall.

The left leg is straight like a rod along the side of the triangle. The beautiful bunch of hair is resting on the right shoulder. She enjoys the fragrance of the lotus and therefore is known as padmagandha.

Darpana (*holding a mirror*)

The left arm is beautifully raised above the head along the upper line of the left triangle, and the palm is placed on the hair towards the front.

Her looks are turned down towards the right side of the madhya-rekha. The lovely right arm goes downwards and rests on the middle part of the right triangle.

Holding a mirror she is beautiful and gives pleasure to the people.

The two breasts are in front on the left side along the middle-line.

The navel is on the madhya-bindu. The right leg goes down to the left corner, the left thigh goes down to the same triangle.

Then it bends slightly to the right side down to the base of the middle line. She should be made wearing a beautiful drapery around the hip.

This is the lovely maiden by the name of darpana. The mirror can be placed in front of her face in various ways.

Vinyasa (*fixed in meditation*)

This girl of beautiful limbs is turned to the right and her lovely face is seen in profile. The head is on the upper limit, the two arms are close to the beautiful shoulders.

The left arm is along the left side of the triangle. The forearm is crossing in front along the horizontal middle-line.

The other arm has the same position and the palm is placed in Nyasa-mudra. The left leg, starting from the madhya-bindu, is straight like a rod.

From the side of madhya-bindu, the right thigh goes down along the right triangle and the shin goes down to the end.

With hands poised as if doing japa-nyasa (repeating the names of God), Vinyasa is lost in meditation. With lovely garments on her hips, she is most beautiful.

Ketakibharana (*wearing ketaki blossoms*)

On the left side are head, chest, hip and arm. The breasts are across the centre upon the middle-line.

The right arm is raised along the right triangle-line. The forearm starts from the uppermost side bindu (cheda-bindu) and goes on to the middle line.

The palm is placed on the left side of her head. The hand holds a ketaki leaf; this is the auspicious ketakibharana.

The hip is heavily bulging out to the left. In the upper part above that the hand is placed with a flower.

The hip and the belly are wholly within the left side. The left leg, of beautiful form, goes to the lower part of the triangle,

Down to the lowest right corner where the foot is on the ground-line. Below, the the right knee comes forward to the corner of the triangle.

Below that, the beautiful right shank is crossing behind the left leg (chanda padavat, which is Krisna's pose when playing the flute).

Matrmurti (*mother*)

Afterwards hear the description of the beautiful image of a mother.

The head is placed upon the middle-line, and so is the whole beautiful body. Hear the description of the limbs.

The left arm on the left side is near the left triangle, from the end of the oblique line (cheda rekha) the forearm lies on the horizontal middle-line.

Inside the left triangle is the figure of a child. From face to foot it is on the middle line and the body is to be nicely fat.

Hanging from the right shoulder, the right hand is placed on the thigh. Both feet are placed in an ordinary way.

This image is in the beautiful likeness of a mother with a child.

Camara *(holding a fly whisk)*

Now hear about another type, the Camara, who is an attendant on the deities.

Both her feet are like those of the Matrmurti, in the same position, only the upper part (the head) is somewhat different.

The face is turned towards the right side, and the right arm is within the triangle, so is the forearm on her beautiful chest.

The lower part of the left arm is inside the left triangle. The forearm comes in front, holding the garment by which she is adorned.

In her right hand is a fly-whisk, resting on her right shoulder. This is the serene figure of Camara, who increases the joy of the gods.

Gunthana *(concealing herself)*

Gunthana is a woman concealing herself with a veil, always showing her back in tribhanga (three bends). The head is straight in the middle of the upper horizontal division.

The hips are placed on the vertical middle-line and rest on the madhya-bindu. The left arm is in front of the body, touching the lower lip.

The right arm is on that side near the upper line of the triangle. With the upper part and the head covered, that girl is gunthana.

This young girl, showing her full back, is standing firmly in a virile attitude (virasana). Below the left foot is on a line of creepers.

The left thigh touches the right triangle, the left shin is on the right side and touches the end of the ground-line.

She sometimes holds a drapery of flowers, or sometimes a fan. This supremely beautiful girl is gunthana, loved by women.

Nartaki *(dancer)*

The celestial Nartaki is turning her body and looks upwards on the right side. The head is above in the usual place (on the upper horizontal), and the arms are raised towards the sky.

Above, the hands are joined with interlocked fingers (chanda palli) and are lying on the middle vertical. The navel is on the madhya-bindu, she is attracting by her dance.

The beautiful hip is placed on the bindu of the right line (apex of the triangle). The right leg goes down to the left lower corner.

The left leg is crossing (chanda) behind, along the middle line, and is placed on the ground. This nartaki is the embodiment of dance.

Sukasarika *(playing with a parrot or maina)*

The head stands on the left side. The left arm is along the triangle and the left forearm is in front of the shapely breast.

The right forearm is a little raised upto the right triangle. In the hand she holds a parrot or maina, or other beautiful birds.

The navel is on the madhya-bindu. Both legs are in a slant, the beautiful left shank is turned towards the wall.

By its side the right leg goes lengthwise towards the right. This girl is known under the name of Sukasarika.

Nupurapadika (*with ankle-bells*)

The beautiful body, standing along the madhyarekha is drawn towards the right. The left arm hangs down on the line of the left triangle.

The right arm is as described in the previous image and holds a beautiful flower-bud. In the lower part, of the two legs the right one is bent.

The right knee there below touches the first horizontal. The position of the shank is obliquely set towards the left side.

The left hand is placed where there is a string of ankle-bells; her finger-tips are on the ankle-bells. The left leg is slanting down to the end of the middle-line.

Mardala (*drummer*)

The head is slightly bent, touching the left line of the left triangle. The chest is on the middle line, cut across by the left arm.

The shoulder part on the left side touches the line of the triangle. From there the beautiful arm is going down to the horizontal middle-line. In the breadth of the middle-line a divinely beautiful mardala should be carved.

The right arm behind that (mardala) is up to the limit of the right triangle line, the sole of the left foot rests on the ground.

The right foot is at the same place along the middle-line. This is the extremely beautiful mardala, intoxicated with her play.

With both hands joined (on one side) she gives joy by her rhythms. These are the sixteen maidens that dwell in a building made with art.

In the pagas of the Bhadra and Rekha temples, they enrapture people everywhere. This delightful lot should be decked with various ornaments,

With beautiful armlets, necklaces, ear-rings and bracelets. They should be adorned with all ornaments and with all auspicious things on the body.

The naribandha is always attractive, specially on the sikhara. In this way the gavaksa and other parts should be decorated by the expert.

ROOF SLABS

On the mukhasala the slabs (pata) are of five kinds, depending on the place of the roof; they are set only for protection or consolidation.

The front part is rounded and the whole stone is in beautiful slanting shape, either square, rectangular or irregular.

For the corners there are the irregular stones, and for the sides the rectangular and square ones. The front part should be solidly fixed on the khumbhi-desa (stone with frieze of kumbhas).

In the inner hall it is necessary to put strong scaffolding.

Supported on these, the stones should be put one above the other in due order.

The portion which remains (the projected fourth part) is the best place for the heavy stones, which should be placed lengthwise upon these well-made stone slabs.

The competent sculptor should carve the front portion round with a creeper-band or it can remain plain and polished.

As a patti (band) on the wall is beautified by a vasanta, thus the strong upper part should be covered with clusters of creepers.

The front part should be properly carved by the Silpin as a (strong) tooth. This part should be strongly fixed on the upper end of the slabs.

Another kind of covering is sometimes made by setting the stones in a different way. But this covering should always be made of best, smooth (saumya) stones.
The tooth-like front portion of the stones in the form of parrots' beaks is mounted upon and is inserted into the slab below.
On every one of these mortices (arddha-garbhaka) have to be carved. Above that, in the place of the air-passage (vayavya sthana) there are kumbhakas and mithuna images.
The skilfull sculptor should decorate the air window part beautifully. Its width is one-fourth part of the whole roof (lahara-ksetra).
Or its width should be made double that of the Rajabandha. This part is always beautiful and is called the pidha.
According to the Silpa Sastras the mithuna-kumbha frieze should be divided into equal rectangles or squares.
As many as are the number of mortices (nimna garbhaka), so many are the number of the strong supports (dharini) with tenons to be made.
There is either a kumbha with flowers and an air-passage, or a kumbha and mithuna alternating, covering the whole part.
When it is only an air-passage without decorations, it is called vatasangrahi. The back of the supports should always be made like flowers.
In a beautiful temple to the Mother-goddess, made in accordance with the Ista Devi, the famous mithuna-kumbha is without any doubt the best.

SECOND PRAKASA

Kamabandha (love-images)
In connection with this, hear the description of the Kamabandha. I am telling its essence (tattva) according to the doctrine of the Silpa.
Desire is the root of the universe. From desire all beings are born. Primordial matter (mulabhuta) and all beings are re-absorbed again through desire.
Without Siva and Sakti creation would be nothing but imagination (kalpana). Without the action of Kama (kamakriya) there would be no birth or death.
Siva himself is visibly manifested as the Mahalinga, and Sakti in the form of the Bhaga (womb) (bhagasvarupini). By their union the whole universe comes into being. This is called the work of desire (kamakriya).
The science of kamakala (kamakalavidya) is an extensive subject in the Agamas. A place without love-images is known as a 'place to be shunned' (tyakta mandala).
In the opinion of the Kaulacaras it is always a base, forsaken place, resembling a dark abyss, which is shunned like the den of Death.

PLACE OF JUNCTION (MILANASTHANA)

That place on the front in the width of the raha is the place of junction (milanasthana). The vimana is the best bridegroom and the mukhasalika is the bride.
That place in front where the bridegroom and the bride meet becomes the place of junction (sandhiksetra). Above that, half of the raha has to be made,
Reaching from the sixth division upwards upto the end of the place, that part has to be beautifully carved upto the lion-head.

TYPES OF LIONS

Four types of lions are best: Viraja, Jagrata, Udyata, Gajakranta. These are the four most important lion-kings.
Viraja is turning and looking backwards, according to rules. He is always standing on his hindlegs. Viraja is the best of lions.
The rider on the lion standing on his hind legs is very fierce, in beautiful warrior attire. This Jagrata lion looks imperious.
Seated on a platform with both hind legs on the ground, the Udyata lion gives the feeling that he is ready to jump down to earth.

The Gajakranta lion is seated with three legs on the elephant king, one paw held in front of the chest, as if he were ready to seize him.
The grand Udyata lion is best on the raha in the upper part of the temple. In various forms he is mainly on the Vadhabhi type of temples.
In the middle part of the front there is a lion-head like a makarika, its lower part being in the shape of a makarika and the upper a lion-face.
From the mouth of the makarika a curly (kuncita) creeper is hanging down. This lion in the guise of a makara has to be placed on the front-part.
He has a long, fierce nose, a deep mouth-cavity like that of a makara, below the nose a moustache resembling the chalice of a dhatura flqwer.
On the forehead a beautiful tilaka in the shape of the end of an elephant's trunk. Below in the mouth, ferocious fangs and a tongue are carved.
A lion-head made in the same way is placed on the back-side, in the middle of the Vimanamalini, so as to make it extremely beautiful.
In the centre of the side parts the Udyata lions are best. These Udyatas are jumping towards both directions (north and south).

MERIT OF BUILDING A TEMPLE

The sikharamalini (Vimanamalini) constructed with all its characteristic features is the best and greatest of temples, giving delight to the Silpin.
By erecting such a piece of architecture (Visvakarmanga) he will definitely attain liberation (moksa). In this world he will always have peace, wealth, grain and sons.
By the attainment of mastery in art (silpa siddhi) he has not to undergo another birth. The knowledge of art (silpa-vidya) is always best and gives all bliss.
By proficiency in the art of building (gathana-karma) inexhaustible merit is acquired. When a Raja, endowed with a hundred kingdoms, with hundreds of villages,
With a hundred bags of gold, when that best king with a hundred wives of golden limbs, with the power of a hundred arms,
Does not erect a temple that will stand forever, all this will be fruitless. All things, wealth, grain and children (happiness) vanish with the passing of time,
Everything vanishes with time, only a monument will last forever. That fruit which is obtained by the Rajasuya or by a soma-sacrifice,
That fruit is more than fully obtained by the erection of a Sakti temple. Such a monument, made according to the Sastras, gives all siddhis.
The lines and divisions of the temple, all the carvings and other things are described in proper order in the chapter on Temples of the Saudhikagama.
That king, who for his fame (kirti rupena) erects a monument, a Sakti temple, with a pure mind, in an auspicious moment,
And who completes the work according to the rules without obstructions, will go to the abode of Siva.

DIFFERENT CLASSES OF IMAGES

You hear the different classes of images, which are mainly three: highest (uttama), middling (madhyama) and lowest (kanistha), into which they are distinguished.
Uttama. The height of the door to the shrine is divided into eight parts. Leaving always aside one part, the seven below are made into three divisions each.
When of three divisions in the uppermost part, two are left out, and the image made according to the remaining parts, it is the biggest (uttama) class.
Madhyama. The door is divided into nine parts, one upper part is left out. The remaining eight parts are, as before, divided into three subdivisions. Leaving the four upper subdivisions, what remains is the measure of the madhyama image.
Adhama. When the image is made in the measure of the lowest division alone it is known as the lowest (adhama) type.

Such small images should not be used in temples or mandapas, on the pedestal in the middle of the garbha-griha.

CEREMONIES AFTER ESTABLISHING THE IMAGE

After establishing the image, the chief Silpin (Sutradhara) has to take his bath with great devotion in the water of a tank.

He should carry on his head an earthen pot containing a drink (prapanaka) made of black pepper, camphor, milk and gudh, into the garbha-griha.

In the middle of the shrine he should throw the pot and break it. With its liquid he should wipe the divine image clean.

Living on havishya, the tattva-puja is done according to rules. After this also puja of the shrine (prasada) with the proper observances is done.

IN PRAISE OF THE SILPA SASTRAS

The Silpa Sastra as given by Visvakarman is of greatest merit. The books written by Sukra (guru of the Daityas), Jaimini (Mimamsacharya) and others, I am unable to explain.

It is only the Vadhabhi temple in the form of a kharkara, the Vimanamalini type of temple that I am able to explain with knowledge and without hesitation.

The Vimanamalini type, as accepted by the Sastras, I have described according to my limited knowledge, with its measures and features.

The wall part and its depth, the bandhanas and other elements in their proper order, the different parts of the shrine and other features of the temple.

The Sakti temple in particular has always to be made with yantras and other things. The yantras should always be kept secret, as also the divisions and measurements (mantras).

It is only for the understanding of disciples that I have at present explained these matters. Without proper knowledge of the divisions and other matters, the monument will never have harmonious features or proportions (vilaksana).

Describing the various parts and elements without the help of the Sastras would be vain, like walking without eyes in the darkness of the night.

Among temples Vadhabhi is the best. The two divisions of the mukhasala and vimana are described in two parts called prakasas.

This Silpa Prakasa book is meant only for the instruction of disciples.

THE AUTHOR (FROM THE FIRST PRAKASA)

The river Musali, the daughter of the Bhargavi, flows towards the ocean.

On its shore there is a village where I was born in a tantric community, in a family of Udgatas, at present in the Dhaumimandala.

All my forefathers were patronized by kings. My father's name is Kulesvara and that of my mother is Sanjnamayi.

I am Ramachandra, among the best of Brahmins devoted to Kaulacara. On the blue mountain (nilasikhara), in the form of Daksinakalika

My Ista Murti is Jagannatha, the giver of all perfections, the giver of liberation.

(FROM THE SECOND PRAKASA)

Bowing to the feet of Sakti, I salute her who is Bhattarika, and also the raja of Airavatamandala who is a Bhattarika,

Viravarman of great lustre, for his protection again and again! I bow again at the feet of him who is protected by Jagannatha.

By the order and influence (prabhava) of my Sadguru Madhava Bhatta, who is conversant with various Silpas, this book was written for the instruction of disciples only.

In the understanding of the various best sastras there are differences due to local customs, the temples are of various types according to regions and canons.

Since there are different methods in the local ways of work, these sastras are founded on the practice of the local kaulacara.

Although I am of poor knowledge, on the strength of practical experience and with the knowledge given by my guru as it was heard and read,

This book is made in accordance with various Agama-Sastras, to be revealed to the disciples, with the order of the parts and divisions of the temple.

Of all the Sastras, the Silpa Sastra taught by Visvakarman is the highest. For giving liberation and for bestowing all siddhis, the erection of a monument is best.

In order to describe all parts and the works on various elements of the temple, I have told this Silpa Sastra known as Silpa Prakasa.

Notes on the Text

ARASI	Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India
Ep. Ind.	Epigraphia Indica
JASB	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal
JBORS	Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society
MASI	Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India
OHRJ	Orissa Historical Research Journal
PIHC	Proceedings of the Indian History Congress
Silpa Prakasa	Alice Boner and Sadasiva Rath Sarma (translated and annotated), *Silpa Prakasa of Ramachandra Kaulacara*, Leiden, 1966

CHAPTER 1

[1]The history of the early Orissan dynasties is complex and I have not attempted a complete historical survey, but have only considered some of the major ruling families who may have been in power during the period that the Orissan temple emerged and reached its early culmination. Many of the dates suggested for the lifespan of various dynasties differ from those put forward by long-established authorities such as R. D. Banerji in his masterly volumes on the history of Orissa. Not explained here is the basis for dating, which has emerged as a result of my researches into Orissan history, as this does not seem to be an appropriate place for the long detailed analyses that would be required to do justice to the subject. The reason for the brevity of the historical survey is because it will be seen in the concluding chapter that historical vicissitudes prove to be of little relevance to the main topic here — the architectural and sculptural evolution of the early temples. If at all it had been possible to directly connect any ruler of any dynasty with a particular set of temples, it would have been of importance to explain my scheme of dating.

[2]There is a connection here between these Sailodbhava rulers and the early Somavamsi king of Kosala, Tivara. An inscription of Dharmaraja tells us how Tivara helped Madhava in his succession fight against his elder brother Dharmaraja, the rightful heir to the throne, and how Dharmaraja was ultimately successful.

[3]After the loss of the central portions of their territories to the Bhaumas, the dynasty seems to have lingered on some 15 years more in outlying areas. Two brothers, Allavaraja and Madhyamaraja appear to have ruled between 736-750, and

the Tekkali plates of Madhyamaraja tell us how his brother 'got himself crowned in a fort in the Odra country'.

[4]This date and the reference in Chinese chronicles were discovered by Sylvain Levi. See his "King Subhakara of Orissa," *Ep. Ind.*, XV, pp. 363-364.

[5]This date also agrees with Rajguru's computation of 736 for the start of the Bhauma era based on astronomical data provided by certain copper plate grants. For details see Rajguru, "The Gangam Copper Plate of Satrubhanja Deva of Samvat 198," *OHRI*, IV, pp. 67-78. B. Misra in his book, *Orissa Under the Bhauma Kings*, evades the entire problem, and brings Bhauma rule to an end prior to 795. He places the third ruler at 660 and ends the dynasty in 794.

[6]There is much disagreement regarding the rulers of this late Kara group, as also on the nature of their relationship with the early Karas. For a discussion of the complexity of the situation see S. C. De, "Problems of the Genealogy of the Bhauma-Kara Dynasty," *OHRI*, VIII, pp. 151-157.

[7]Prime among such objections is the fact that Janamejaya in his inscriptions describes himself as one who worshipped at the feet of *Paramabhattaraka Maharajadhiraja Paramesvara* Sri Sivaguptadeva with no genealogy and no mention of any form of relationship between Janamejaya and Sivagupta. If he were a son or grandson, this would surely have been mentioned. In addition there is no mention in even the earliest of Janamejaya's records of his just having acquired his position as Lord of Trikalinga.

[8]One method of dating the Somavamsi rulers is by working backwards from Rajendra Chola's invasion of Orissa and the mention of his defeating a ruler named Indraratha at Yayatinagara. This defeat is mentioned in twelve of Rajendra Chola's inscriptions commencing from an epigraph of his 12th regnal year and ending up with a record dated in his 31st year. For a complete list of these incriptions see Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubanesvar*, p. 46.

[9]For a review of all the dates for the commencement of the Ganga era see Rajguru, *Inscriptions of Orissa*, Vol. II, Appendix I, "The Ganga Era."

[10]The Chicacole plates of the king Madhukamarnava are dated in the Ganga year 526. This Madhukamarnava must be the same Madhukamarnava who was father of Vajrahasta V and grandfather of Rajaraja. The dates of these later Ganga rulers are known and Madhukamarnava commenced his rule in 1019. If he issued the Chicacole plates in the very year he came to the throne, the Ganga era commenced in 493 (1019 minus 526). This date would need slight adjustment depending on the regnal year in which he issued the grant. We propose to ignore the objection that this could be some other ruler—we have more than one Kamarnava, but only one Madhukamarnava. Equally dubious is the objection that the scribe intended to write Ganga/Kadamba era 526, but by default put down merely Ganga era 526. The evidence of the Chicacole plates of King Madhukamarnava is most persuasive and appears to us to have resolved the problem.

[11]Their exact history is so confused that Mahatab in his *History of Orissa*, p. 62, states, "No connection or relationship among the different Bhanja families of Orissa has yet been established; so it is unnecessary to discuss their dynastic history."

[12]The first verse of all early Sailodbhava inscriptions commences thus; see Rajguru's *Inscriptions of Orissa*, Vol. I.

[13]See Thomas Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, Vol. II, pp. 191 ff.

[14]This reference is contained in the famous Hathigumpha inscription of king Kharavela.

[15]Rajguru, *Inscriptions of Orissa*, Vol. II. See for example the Jirjingi plates of Indravarman, pp. 4-8.

[16]*Ibid.* See Parlakimedi plates of Indravarman, pp. 34-47.

[17]B. Misra, *Orissa Under the Bhauma Kings*, pp. 12-20.

[18]Rajguru, *Inscriptions of Orissa*, Vol. IV, pp. 47-54.

[19]*Ibid.*, pp. 130-137.

[20]See note 4 to Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 2

[1]Manu Samhita, VII, as quoted in Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, Vol. I, p. 10.

[2]Alice Boner and Sadasiva Rath Sarma, *Silpa Prakasa*, Leiden, 1966, II, 789, p. 128.

[3]*Ibid.*, p. xviii.

[4]K. C. Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubanesvar*, p. 66 f.

[5]N. K. Bose, "A Temple under Construction," *Journal of the Indian Society for Oriental Art*, XII, 1945.

CHAPTER 3

[1]K. V. Soundara Rajan, *Indian Temple Styles*, p. 83.

[2]Fabri, *History of the Art of Orissa*, p. 121.

[3]*Ibid.*, p. 122. Fabri surmises that the Markandesvar might have been the earliest temple of two parts. We shall see that the Markandesvar is an advanced temple that could not possibly have been the earliest such.

[4]Arya, "Chronology of the Soma Temples," *OHRI*, XI, No. 1, pp. 41-49.

[5]In this connection we must mention Panigrahi's description of the ancient process of construction, according to which the shrine was buried in earth as it progressed in height, with the heavy stones being dragged up inclined mud ramps. Such a method of construction would necessarily mean that the shrine had to be completed first before the *mukhasala* could be commenced. At the same time one must admit that in the case of the Lingaraj as also of Konarak there does appear to have been some miscalculation of measurements in the construction of so massive a *mukhasala*. Thus on both temples, half of a *kanya* on the shrine wall is eclipsed by the *pidhas* of the *mukhasala* roof, with only half the figure being visible. It is difficult to believe that the architects who built these magnificent temples should so miscalculate, but we can find no other explanation.

[6]Alice Boner and Sadasiva Rath Sarma, *Silpa Prakāsa*, II, 594, p. 111.

[7]*Ibid.*, II, 596, p. 111.

[8]Fabri, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 131, where Fabri states that "here too it appears that the sikhara was either built a few years later, or that it was not organically planned, for there are no joints between the two parts of the Simhanatha either".

[11] *Silpa Prakasa*, I, 521-538, p. 56 f.

[12] *Idem.*

[13] *Ibid.*, II, 68-99, pp. 66-69.

[14] *Ibid.*, II, 255-408, pp. 84-96.

[15] *Ibid.*, II, 45-67, pp. 64-66.

[16] *Ibid.*, II, 409 onwards and p. 96 ff. The author also calls this type Vimanamalini.

[17] *Ibid.*, II, 604, p. 112.

[18] *Ibid.*, II, 557-585, pp. 107-110.

[19] *Ibid.*, II, 263-268, p. 85.

[20] *Ibid.*, II, 187-239, pp. 78-83.

[21] See note 18 above.

[22] *Silpa Prakasa*, II, 294, p. 87.

[23] *Ibid.*, II, 292, p. 87. "The hidden truth of the Sastras is that for the protection and auspiciousness of the temple, these Nagamatrakas should be carved in various places." II, 492, p. 102: "These naga-folk give protection to the temple".

[24] *Ibid.*, I, 365-375, p. 43 f.

[25] *Ibid.*, I, 107-119, pp. 21 ff. and I, 194-202, pp. 29 ff.

[26] *Ibid.*, I, 343-353, p. 42.

CHAPTER 4

[1] A. K. Coomaraswamy, *History of Indian and Indonesian Art*, p. 71.

[2] See Chapter 1, p. 4.

[3] *Silpa Prakasa*, II, 356-369, pp. 92 ff.

[4] Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubanesvar*, pp. 125-134.

[5] *Silpa Prakasa*, I, 392-481, pp. 46-53.

[6] *Ibid.*, II, 498-507, p. 103.

[7] J. N. Banerjea, "The Varahi Temple at Chaurasi," in *V. V. Mirashi Felicitation Volume*. Also see note 3 to Chapter 6.

[8] See note 4 to Chapter 6.

[9] Fabri, *History of the Art of Orissa*, p. 125: "...this type of curled wig comes into fashion by the end of the 6th century.... By 700 it was totally out of fashion."

CHAPTER 5

[1] Nicholas Pevsner, *Outlines of European Architecture*, see Introduction, pp. 15-17.

[2] See Chapter 3, p. 41.

[3] Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubanesvar*, p. 53.

[4] Mentioned by Panigrahi in conversation with the author in February 1974.

[5] Panigrahi, *op. cit.*, pp. 137 ff.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 104.

[7] Panigrahi has placed the Satrughnesvar and Lakshmanesvar temples at 575, and

assigned the Bharatesvar as contemporaneous with the Parasuramesvar (Panigrahi *op. cit.*, pp. 146-149). One sees no necessity for thus splitting the group, and in our view the three temples belong together with the Parasuramesvar.

[8]See pp. 109 ff.

[9]*Idem.*

[10]Panigrahi, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

[11]*Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.

[12]Fabri, *History of the Art of Orissa*, p. 136.

[13]See p. 102.

CHAPTER 6

[1]See Chapter 3, pp. 42 ff.

[2]*Silpa Prakasa*, II, 789, p. 128. The author tells us that this is the type of temple "that I am able to explain with knowledge and without hesitation".

[3]J. N. Banerjea, "The Varahi Temple at Chaurasi," in the *V. V. Mirashi Felicitation Volume*, translates the stages thus: (*i*) *vasikarana* or bringing the kumari under control; (*ii*) *sanmoha*, enchanting her; (*iii*) *akarsana* and *uccatana*, or attracting and preparing her for the sex act; (*iv*) *yoniabhiseka*, or consecration of the female organ; (*v*) *purascarana*, the preliminary stage of the act; (*vi*) *rajpana* or drinking the raja; (*vii*) *prastaya*, or entering; (*viii*) *nivriti* or return to the normal state.

[4]Somavamsi charters commence with the mention of their capital city Yayatinagara, "where the enjoyment of love is being continually intensified and still more intensified by the close embraces (of lovers), by which fatigue is removed, in which the hissing sound often appears, and in which hairs stand on end, although such enjoyment suffers interruptions as the ardent young couple show their skill in the various processes of conjugal enjoyment with their eyes dilated and with their minds subdued and fascinated by amorous thoughts." There follows another eight lines or so in the same vein praising the pursuit of love.

[5]*Silpa Prakasa*, I, 538, p. 57, "In a beautiful temple to the Mother-Goddess . . . the famous *mithuna-kumbha* is without any doubt the best."

[5]R. D. Banerji, "Antiquities of Baudh State," *JBORS*, Vol. 15, 1929, pp. 64-86.

[7]*Idem.*

[8]Fabri, *History of the Art of Orissa*, p. 139.

[9]See Chapter 5, p. 113.

[10]See Rajguru, *Inscriptions of Orissa*, Vol. I, Part ii, pp. 40-43.

[11]See Chapter 5, p. 117.

[12]Fabri, *op. cit.*, p. 42, describes the beautiful *darpana* (on page 64 of our book) as "a masterpiece of 6th century work, marked by the characteristic moderation in jewellery or the gentle exaggeration of posture that are signs of early mannerist work. (By the 7th century, personal ornament increases and there is a noticeable tendency to twist the body into sinuous attitudes)".

CHAPTER 7

[1]See Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubanesvar*, caption to Figure 60.

[2]See Chapter 5, p. 114.

[3]R. D. Banerji, "Antiquities of Baudh State," *JBORS*, Vol. 15, 1929, pp. 64-86.

CHAPTER 8

[1]Rajguru, *History of the Gangas, passim.*

[2]Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubanesvar*, pp. 26-28.

[3]*Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

[4]*Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.

CHAPTER 9

[1]Fabri, *History of the Art of Orissa*, p. 103.

[2]*Ibid.*, p. 106.

[3]Pramod Chandra, "A Vamana Temple at Marhia and Some Reflections on Gupta Architecture," *Artibus Asiae*, XXXII, 2/3, pp. 125-145.

[4]Cunningham, *Archaeological Survey Reports*, Vol. XXI, p. 96.

[5]See Chapter 1, p. 19.

[6]Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubanesvar*, pp. 150-157.

Glossary

abhiseka	ritual bathing of an image
adharasila	the foundation stone of a monument
akshamala	rosary depicted as held by various deities, specially Brahma
alasa	maiden standing in an indolent position
amalaka	round, fluted, cushion-like member crowning a temple or gateway
amalaki	a small *amalaka*
anartha	intermediary vertical rib of the shrine tower or wall
anuraha	recessed sections between the various ribs of a tower, or between various sections of the temple wall
astagraha	eight 'planets'
astaparivara	a temple of eight units
astottari	a system of eight
ayudha purusha	small attendant male figure with the emblem of the god on his head
bada	the wall of a temple as separate from the tower above it
bandha	a frieze, a band, a level of mouldings
bandhana	a section of moulding separating the wall of the shrine from the tower
bhara-vahaka	dwarf-like male figure carved at certain strategic points, so that it appears he is supporting sections of the temple
bho	stylized arch on Orissan temples with a curly-headed *yaksha* leaning against it on either side
bhumi-sparsa-mudra	earth-touching gesture, usually associated with the Buddha
bodhisattva	a Buddhist divinity at a stage just prior to attaining Buddhahood and often depicted as an attendant of the Buddha
chaitya	the Buddhist chapel
chaitya arch	the arched window decorating the facade of the Buddhist *chaitya*
chakra	wheel; the wheel of Vishnu
chauri	fly-whisk

dalamalika	a maiden (as depicted in sculpture) standing under a tree and drawing down one of its branches towards her
damaru	the drum of Siva, shaped like an hour-glass
damaru-garbha	the term denotes the level of the base mouldings of a temple, which are shaped like the *damaru*
darpana	a maiden (as depicted in sculpture) looking into a mirror
deul	the sanctum of a temple
dhyana mudra	formal hand gesture indicating absorption in meditation
dvarapala	door-keeper
dvarapalika	female door-keeper
gada	club held by Vishnu
gaja	elephant
Gajalakshmi	the goddess Lakshmi as depicted in traditional motifs, seated or standing on a lotus with elephants on either side with water-pots in their upraised trunks
Gajasamharamurti	traditional representation of Siva dancing triumphantly after having defeated a demon in the form of an elephant
gana	dwarf-like attendant of Siva
gandharva	a semi-divine being
garbha	womb; also embryo
garbhagriha	sanctum sanctorum of a temple
Garuda	the eagle mount of Vishnu
gelbai	a decorative scroll within the curves of which are placed tiny male figures depicted as if climbing up the scroll
ghata	an earthen pot; a section of base moulding shaped thus
graha	a 'planet'; a god personified as a planet
jagamohana	hall in front of a shrine
jali	trellis-work
jharavali	row of pendants
kakapaksha	cockscomb; hairstyle arranged to resemble a cockscomb, usually of the god Kartikeya
kalasa	vase-like member crowning a Siva temple
kamagarbha	the name given to the advanced variety of *khakhara* temple
kanya	maiden
kartari	curved, sharp knife
kayotsarga	position of an image shown as standing stiffly with feet together and with arms held straight down along the sides and reaching down to the knees, usually of Jain images
ketaka	a flower
khakhara	temple with a barrel-vaulted tower

khura — hoof; the lowest section of base mouldings shaped thus

kirtimukha — a decorative sculptural motif showing the head of a lion-like creature with strings of beads issuing from its mouth

konaka — corner vertical rib of the shrine tower of the walls

kukutasana — literally, seated like a cock; the squatting position

kumbha — vase or pot

lahiri — a wave; in architectural terms referring to different levels, usually of a ceiling

lakuta — club held by the deity Lakulisa

lalitasana — sitting posture in which one leg is bent and placed along the throne while the other hangs down

linga — phallic emblem of Siva

makara — mythical crocodile-like creature, the vehicle of the river goddess Ganga

mandapa — a hall; usually the hall in front of the shrine of a temple

mithuna — a loving couple, a popular sculptural motif

mridangam — the horizontally held drum of south India

mukhasala — hall in front of the shrine of an Orissan temple

naga — semi-divine being, half-man and half-snake

nagini — female counterpart of a *naga*

nari — a woman

naribandha — level along a temple wall reserved for images of *naris*

navagraha — the nine 'planets'

padmagarbha — the name given to the advanced temple of the *rekha* variety

padmasana — the cross-legged sitting posture

pancharatha — division into five vertical segments; a shrine tower or wall divided thus

panchayatana — a temple of five units

parsva-devatas — the deities placed in the large niches on the three exterior walls of the shrine and closely associated with the god to whom the temple is dedicated

pidhas — receding levels of the roof of the Orissan temple hall

purnaghata — a pot overflowing with foliage, which was a popular decorative motif

raha — central vertical segment of tower or walls

raja-bandha — level of mouldings carved with scenes of royalty

rathayukta — name given to the early type of *rekha* temple

rekha — typical Orissan temple tower

sasanadevi — attendant goddess of the Jain tirthankaras

sikhandaka — typical hairstyle of the god Kartikeya in which the hair is arranged in three sections and resembles a cockscomb

sikhara — tower of a temple

silpin — craftsman

tala-garbhika	that portion of the mouldings of a temple below the central *parsva-devata* niche
tika	decorative mark applied by women on the forehead
torana	maiden (as depicted in sculpture) standing in an open doorway
torana	arched gateway
tribhanga	poised at three angles; position of the human figure that displays such a distinct dehancement
trimurti	a triple head, frequently of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva
triratha	divided into three vertical segments; tower or wall divided thus
urdhva linga	erect phallus
usnisa	cranial protuberance on the head of the Buddha
vahana	a vehicle of the gods
vaitalika	name given to the early type of *khakhara* temple
vajra	thunderbolt, held by the Hindu god Indra and his consort Indrani, also by the Bodhisattva Vajrapani
vajramastaka	the elaborate dotted double arch decorating the central rib of the shrine tower
varada mudra	formal hand gesture of granting a wish
vayavya-sthana	passage to let in air; a ventilator
vigraha	an image
vigraha bandha	level along a temple wall reserved for *vigrahas*
vyakhyana mudra	formal hand gesture of preaching
yaksha	semi-divine being, male
yakshi	semi-divine being, female
yantra	symbolical diagram used in worship; schematic diagram used as a basis for the composition of sculptural images
yogapatta	a band of cloth tied around the upraised knees of meditating figures seated in a cross-legged position
yoni	the vulva
yoni pitha	pedestal shaped like the *yoni*

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